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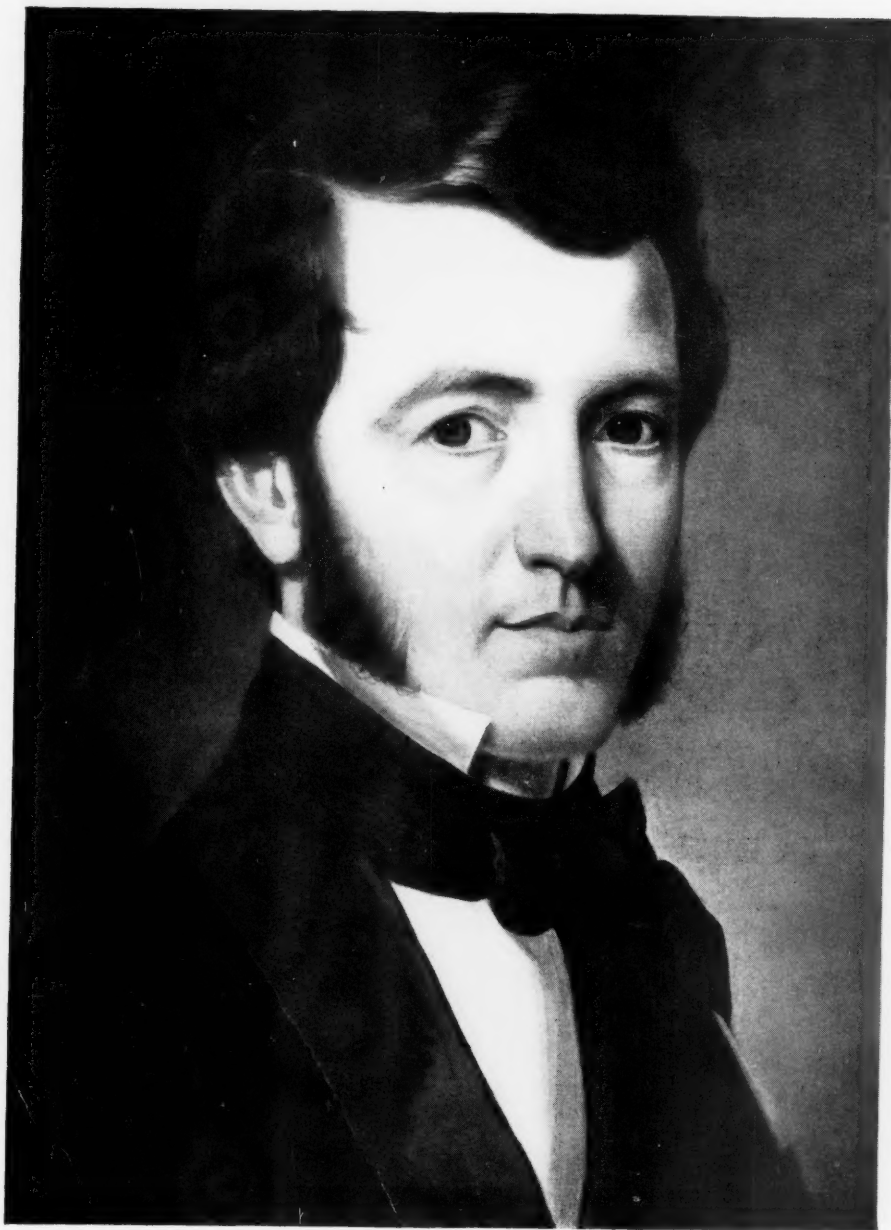
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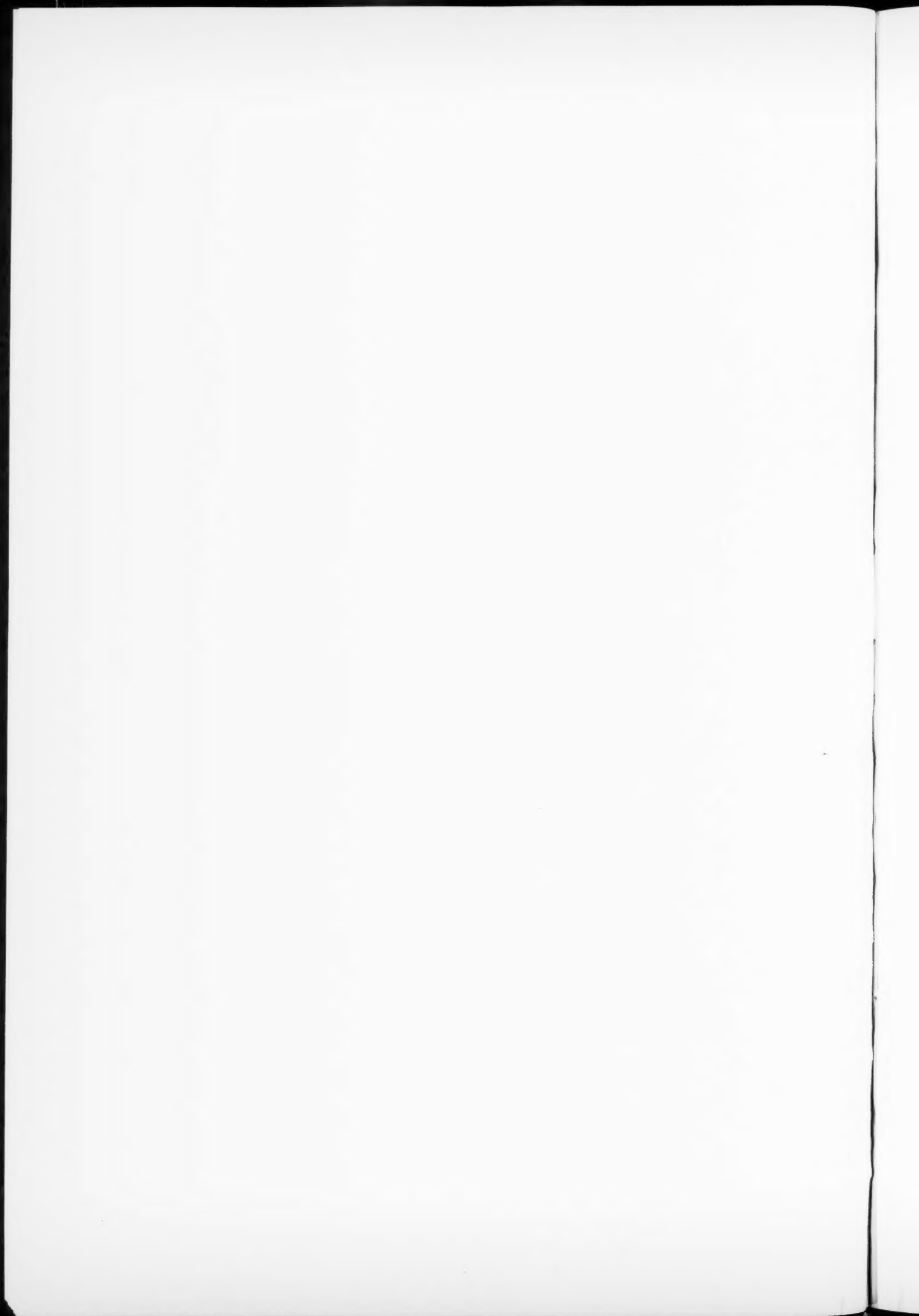


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J. R. Sloan: Self-Portrait, 1854  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

## Junius R. Sloan: Self-Taught Artist



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## ART IN AMERICA

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*This Is Our Fortieth Anniversary Volume*



# JUNIUS R. SLOAN

## SELF-TAUGHT ARTIST

By J. CARSON WEBSTER

*Northwestern University*

This study is based on the paintings, studies and drawings left in the artist's studio at his death, his letters, and other records of his life, together with additional paintings collected by his son, the late Percy H. Sloan of Chicago. At the recent death of the latter this material was divided into two parts. The paintings, in oil and water-color, numbering near two hundred, were placed in a trust, The Midwest Art Association, Chicago. Louis P. Miller is Trustee. This collection will here be called the Sloan Collection; and all paintings referred to are to be understood as being in this collection unless another location is given. On the other hand, an "Autobiographical Fragment," the artist's account books, his letters to members of his family, letters to him, and many letters between members of the Spencer family, into which he married, newspaper clippings, etc., were given to the Newberry Library, Chicago. This will be called the Spencer Collection; and any material of this type is in that collection.

The Sloan Collection is not yet stabilized; paintings have been sold from it from the death of the artist's wife, in 1923, right down to the present day; and it is not readily accessible at the moment. A substantial number of paintings from it were exhibited at the Midwest College Art Conference, Evanston, Illinois, 1945, and a catalogue-list of these paintings was published at that time.

### I

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY was full of minor artists, too full, perhaps we say in our impatience, yet there was much for them to do. Whether self-taught or formed by schools and teachers, settled in the centers or nearer the frontier, they helped form the structure of fine art in the society of their time, and we cannot say precisely how many of them were needed to allow for one Church or one Healy. They answered the desire for fine art in its most wide-spread development, springing up here and there, moving wherever they could find a call for their services, criss-crossing the country with their traces, — in an activity that seems, as we look back on them, almost absurd, such was the smallness of its reward. Yet they were the outworking in society of the same force that produced the major artists, the instinct for fine art, and it was this force that carried them on, hopeful and persistent, until they vanish like sparks blown from the fire by too strong a wind.

Junius Sloan (1827-1900) was clearly one of these minor artists who stand somewhere between the folk artists or industrial and commercial artisans, on the one hand, and the leaders in the fine arts on the other. Throughout a long life devoted to art he was known only in local centers where he lived and worked; and it would be hard to find an artist

who was more directly and continuously related to the middle reaches of art and its patronage in America. He is recommended to study also by the great mass of material from his life and his studio which still exists today. Drawing upon this material as it meets our needs, our aim is to set forth the chief features of his life, his art, and his associates, not as unique events, but rather as contributing to a more concrete knowledge of the growth of art in 19th century America.

The Sloan family in America was founded by a Scotchman of that name who came to the new world in Wolfe's army, and remained to settle in this country. Moving gradually westward, the members of this family were living in the area near Lake Erie, in northwestern Pennsylvania and northeastern Ohio, at the time Junius Sloan was born, at Kingsville, Ohio, on March 10, 1827. His father, Seymour Sloan, was a blacksmith and tool-maker, "a stern and mighty man;" his mother, Drusilla Luce, was known for her skill in the gentler craft of millinery; and no other signs of artistic talents are preserved in the family tradition. Although his father viewed the choice as a foolish one, in 1848 Junius Sloan, with grammar school and a year at an "academy" as education, was able to choose the profession of artist without an open break with his parents. He turned first to the life of an itinerant portrait painter, his first efforts being offered to the public in Ashtabula, Ohio, where he was painting portraits in February and March, 1848, at \$10.00 apiece. He had already met a painter of Erie, Pennsylvania, Moses Billings, and, from the warmth of his expressions about Billings, we must assume that he had already shown something of what he could do to Billings for his opinion and advice.<sup>1</sup> In April he was in Erie for a short stay, and, in a letter to his friend and chief correspondent, Robert C. Spencer, announced his intention of taking "lessons" from Billings. He remained in Erie until June, presumably getting some kind of instruction. An early *Self-Portrait* by Billings, in the Erie Public Museum, is in a general way similar to Sloan's work later in the fifties (can it perhaps be a portrait by Sloan?); but a later *Self-Portrait* is in a softer, more glowing style, somewhat prettified, and farther from Sloan's work, as is the portrait of a woman, perhaps an idealized figure, which Billings gave to Sloan. Thus it is not clear that there was any decisive influence so far as style is concerned. Sloan painted portraits in Erie during this time at \$5.00 a head, the lower price probably reflecting the status of understudy which he would hold in relation to Billings.

<sup>1</sup>Moses Billings (1809-84) settled in Erie, Pa., in 1829. WPA, "Annals of Cleveland," 15-16-17, Pt. I, pp. 47-48, shows that he opened a studio there for the season of 1833-34 at least. The Erie Public Museum owns two self-portraits and others connected with his name.

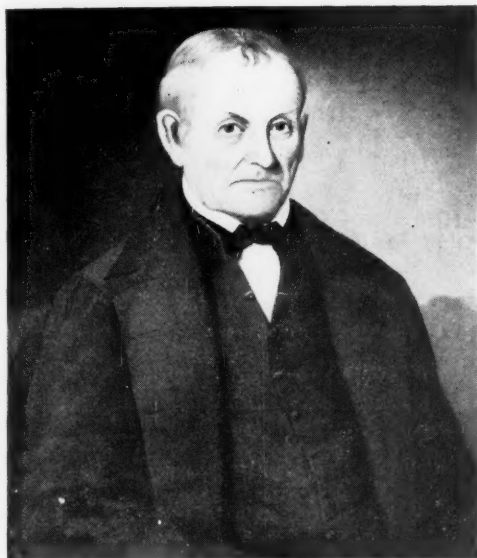


Fig. 1

J. R. Sloan: Samuel Severance, 1848  
*Mrs. Homer Bain, Middlebury, Vt.*



Fig. 2

J. R. Sloan: Platt R. Spencer, 1849-50  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*



Fig. 3

J. R. Sloan: Sara Spencer Sloan, c. 1860  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*



Fig. 4

J. R. Sloan: Moses Billings, 1855  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

With this preparation, such as it was, Junius Sloan left Erie in June, 1848, on a more ambitious itinerary, which was to take him as far as Vermont. He worked northeastward, supporting himself by painting anything, portraits when he could get them, otherwise signs, houses, even fences. He went to Buffalo first, then in succession to Niagara Falls, Rochester, and Pultneyville. He spent a longer time at Camden, where he painted and decorated the altar of the Episcopal Church, and painted several portraits of local notables, all lost today. He also stayed for a time in the neighboring town of Rome. While in Camden he met two brothers, Oliver and Asahel Severance, from Middlebury, Vermont, carpenters by trade, but at the moment travelling daguerreotypists; and they persuaded him to come back to Middlebury with them for the winter, urging that he could find portraits to do there. They made the trip partly by stage and boat, partly on foot, the latter part of the journey giving Junius Sloan views of landscape which he remembered to the end of his life.

In Middlebury he painted the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Severance (Fig. 1). Signed and dated, November 1848, on the backs of the canvases, they are the earliest works of Junius Sloan known today, and are still in fine condition. Very simple in style, they are beginners work clearly. The surfaces are rather hard, the drawing heavy, careful, and schematic in the rendering of details; nothing of the texture of materials is rendered. Yet they attain at points to a certain expressiveness; a quality of cleanness and freshness, as of a carefully and neatly made piece of furniture, arises from this simple and direct, if heavy, drawing, with its hint of rhythmic effects in the features of the face. Some passages do not maintain this quality, as in the fusty color, in tones of yellow and red, which is introduced in the ill-defined something at the side of the sitters. But in a passage like the ribbon of Mrs. Severance's bonnet, which is carried out in cool blue with touches of white for the highlights, the color is crisp as well as the drawing, and the result is effective, if naive. No other portraits done by Sloan in Middlebury are known. B. F. Mason, and others, were available to paint portraits there, and it is doubtful that he would get much to do.<sup>2</sup>

The next spring, 1849, he returned over the same route, passing the summer in Rome and Camden, N. Y., and arriving at his parents' home in West Springfield, Pennsylvania, in the fall.<sup>3</sup> Here he spent the winter of 1849-50 as well as the following summer, doing portraits on occasion. It

<sup>2</sup>Alfred Frankenstein and Arthur K. D. Healy, "Two Journeymen Painters," in *ART IN AMERICA*, XXXVIII, No. 1 (Feb. 1950).

<sup>3</sup>An attractive simple portrait, *Thomas D. Stone*, in the possession of Miss Ruth D. Stone, Camden, N. Y., is close to Sloan's style.

was at this time that he painted, on a visit to the Spencers at their home near Geneva, Ohio, the early *Portrait of Platt R. Spencer* of 1849-50 (Fig. 2), the painting of which is mentioned in a letter dated July 30, 1850. Again simple and direct, it shows a determined effort to capture the quizzical expression of the sitter, who was an accomplished teacher and public speaker and something of a humorist. The color is a simple series of reddish tan tones, similar to the flesh color in the portrait of Mr. Severance but used more effectively, particularly in getting the color to express light as well as hue. The attempt to catch something of the personality of the sitter is carried out with drawing which is a good deal more flexible and less schematic than in the Severance portraits. The naive realist appears in the color of the eye-balls, which is an accurate blue-white but which does not integrate with the pervasive very warm flesh color.

The next few years were unsettled. During the winter of 1850-51 he was in Cincinnati, painting, talking with artist friends. He spent the next summer at home, helping on the farm between times at his easel. In the season of 1851-52 he opened a studio in Erie, Pa., for the first of several stays he made there as an independent artist.<sup>4</sup> In the spring of 1852 he was doing portraits in Poland, Ohio. After a sickness in the summer he went with his parents to help them settle near Wethersfield, now a part of Kewanee, Illinois. Here he stayed a large part of the years 1853 and 1854, helping his parents get established in their new home, looking around for a likely place to open a studio. The winter of 1854-55 he spent in Cincinnati again, apparently in a more ambitious way. He had become engaged the fall before to Sara Spencer, sister of his friend Robert, and in his letters to her we hear of his furnishing a studio in November. Among the artists he was in contact with in Cincinnati was R. S. Duncanson, with whom he had carried on an active correspondence in 1854.<sup>5</sup>

Very few portraits of these years have been located. Among them were small studies, such as the *Rev. Fayette Durlin*, of 1851, in a softer style. His *Self-Portrait*, of 1854 (Cover), is remarkable for the crisp, hard design in which the face and areas of the costume are rendered. The variety of color seen in the face of the *Rev. Durlin* has been abandoned here in favor of broader, harder areas. This picture thus appears as a consummation of the qualities hinted at in the Severance portraits. A portrait draw-

<sup>4</sup>"Erie Weekly Observer," Nov. 8, 1951.

<sup>5</sup>James A. Porter, "Robert S. Duncanson," in *ART IN AMERICA*, XXXIX, No. 3 (Oct. 1951). The letters from Duncanson will add a good deal to what has been known of him. They tell of works he saw in Italy, and of pictures he was painting in 1854, several of Italian subjects, one from "Pilgrim's Progress" (for which he enclosed a composition-sketch), etc.



ing of this time is found in the pencil portrait of Moses Billings, made in Erie in the spring of 1855 (Fig. 4).

In the fall of 1855 this early period of uncertainty came to an end when he opened a studio in the pleasant country town of Princeton, Illinois, a place recommended, as he put it, by "its taste, wealth, and lack of pictures;" and he remained there into 1857. The portraits done at Princeton show that the more hard or crisp style seen in the *Self-Portrait* of 1854 was his regular portrait style of this time, a style marked by little psychological penetration, but evidently suited to the taste of his sitters, for he found plenty of work to do. That he was capable of rather impressive results on occasion is shown by the *Portrait of Robert T. Templeton*, of 1856 (Fig. 5). Here the character is more effectively suggested, the color has slightly greater depth, and the result, as a portrait, is very satisfying in its directness, its avoidance of mannerism, its simple dignity. The distance of this from the Severance portraits shows the extent to which it had been possible for Junius Sloan to train himself.

He considered settling in Chicago at this time, but decided instead to use the profits from the two seasons at Princeton for a season spent in New York City. He arrived in New York in December, in company with a friend from Princeton, Julian Bryant, nephew of William Cullen Bryant, who also wished to study painting. The two shared the studio of Daniel Huntington, in the Appleton Building, at 348 Broadway, Huntington being away at the time. The lack of any records of formal study indicates that his time was applied to the practice of his own painting and the study of the art that was available in exhibitions. We hear, in family letters, of at least one portrait, that of a Rev. Dr. Rankin, painted while in New York, and he had his name listed professionally among the portrait painters of the city.<sup>6</sup> He of course met other artists, as five, in addition to Huntington, had studios in the Appleton Building, and with one of these, Jerome Thompson, Junius Sloan later carried on a friendly correspondence.

Sloan would have not looked indifferently on Huntington's work, some of which must have been left in the studio; and indeed there seems to be an attempt to adopt a more easy style, with a more glowing light upon the surfaces, in Sloan's *Self-Portrait* of 1858. (Junius Sloan kept in his studio until his death a portrait said to be by Huntington.) If he had in mind a more fashionable portraiture, Huntington's style could suggest an elegance of life and of taste very different from the implications of Sloan's own work heretofore, which reflects the middle-land of America rather than the sophistication of the great city. But that the more sophisticated style

<sup>6</sup>"Wilson's Business Directory of New York City," for 1858.



Fig. 5. J. R. Sloan: Robert T. Templeton, 1856  
*Mary Richardson Gibbs, Princeton, Ill.*

was not necessarily better for him is shown by the earlier *Robert T. Templeton*, a work which can easily hold its own beside the rather specious skill of Huntington's later work; and, in any case, the taste to be found in the districts of the mid-land to which he was returning was hardly ready to accept such a style.

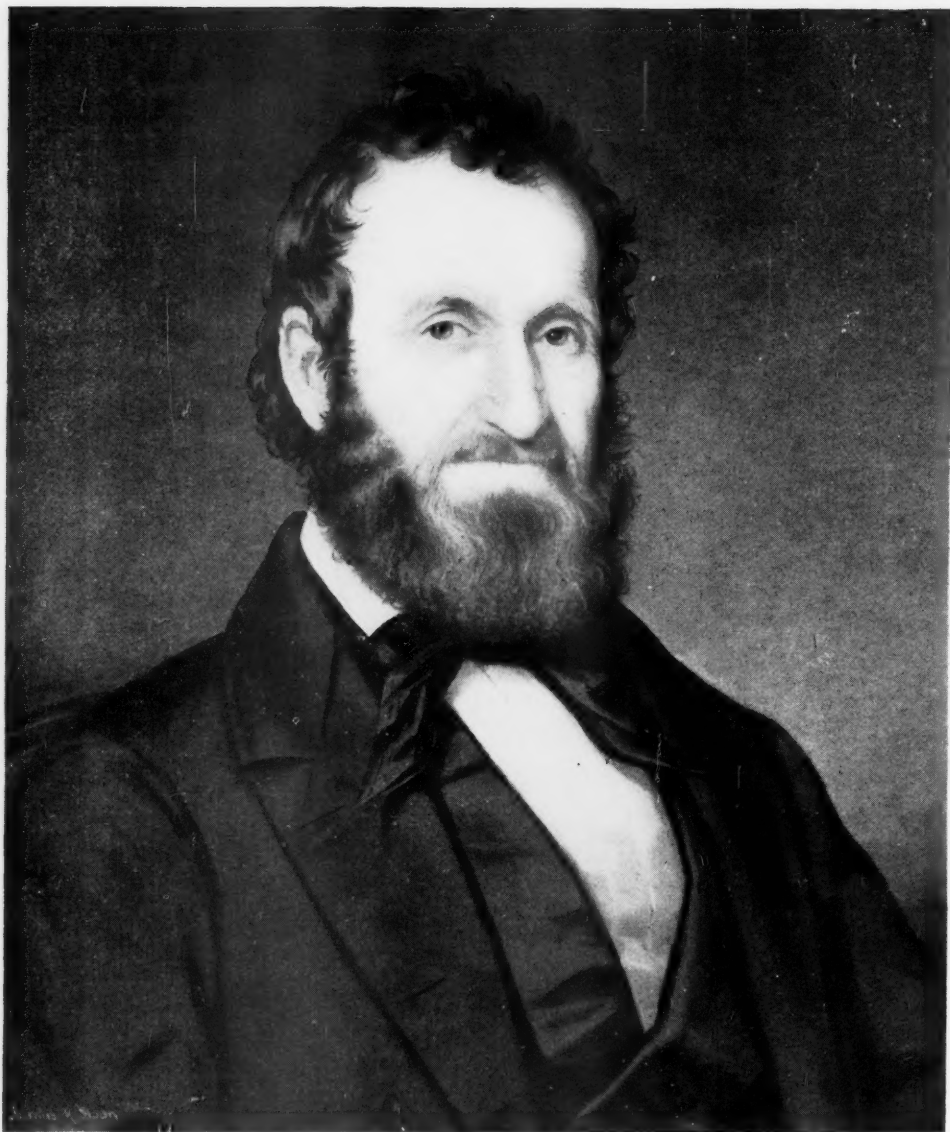


Fig. 6. J. R. Sloan: Platt R. Spencer, 1860

*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

Junius Sloan left New York uneventfully at the end of April, 1858, and returned to the mid-west. He was married to Sara L. Spencer at the end of June, and the couple spent some time with their families, at Whethersfield, Illinois, and Oberlin, Ohio, where the Spencers were living for a short time. It was there that he painted the later *Portrait of Platt R. Spencer* (Fig. 6), in 1860. There is to some extent a return toward the style of his Princeton portraits, in that the features are again boldly drawn



on the canvas, with little atmospheric effect; but the features are drawn with greater ease, the expression caught more effectively; there is a more active light falling on the forms; and there is a more active character in the pose of the figure, which is here set more convincingly in the pictured space. There is consequently a more vigorous effect of spatial depth than in his earlier works. Later works like the portraits of *Henry B. Bryant*, of 1880 (Bryant and Stratton Business College, Chicago), or of his son, *Percy H. Sloan*, of 1882, are marked by a broader handling; but there is less feeling of depth, everything being disposed broadly, echoing the picture plane; and thus they suggest that the active effect of depth was somewhat foreign to Sloan's instinctive preferences in painting. Purely as presentations of the sitters, however, they are as direct and effective as the best of his earlier ones, indeed the portrait of his son is noteworthy for the freshness and simplicity with which it presents a teen-aged boy.

Before leaving his portraiture we should mention one class of work which illustrates the mixture of the arts at this time. This is the portrait which consists of a photographic print worked over by hand, a background introduced, color of course added, etc. Sloan turned his hand to this kind of work in the sixties, for his account books contain among the receipts occasional entries, "for photo," usually of \$5.00 or \$10.00 each, and letters written at Erie in 1863 mention such works. This practice was actively carried on in the region, as another letter shows. He had visited an exhibition of the "Photo-Colorists" of Buffalo, in February, 1863, and wrote at some length about the relative merits of painting and photography; but some of his remarks have a significance that passes beyond that question:

"None of them begins to do as well as we here [i. e. at Erie]. I was surprised at their insipid performance. The fact is that generally only mediocre artists engage themselves in the machine picture business. . . . They are but tame affairs compared with a good oil painting, and I believe they never will be much else, from the fact that those who get them desire and demand smoothness of surface and hardness of outline above other qualities, and would be dissatisfied to have in a photo what is necessary to make a portrait a meritorious work of art."

Here is a clear indication of the social pressure which must have always urged the painter in the more provincial districts toward a tighter, harder style, even when he had a more fluid one available. Painted photographs such as that of his wife, *Sara Spencer Sloan* (Fig. 3), done about 1860, the figure worked over and a background added, can stand for this kind of work. It should not be confused with the retouching of photographic negatives, a practice which was apparently not introduced into this country

before 1868.<sup>7</sup> Although it could serve in part as a means to the same end, i. e. the removal of blemishes and the improvement of the features, it was rooted primarily in the more realistic desires for economy and for accuracy and smoothness of delineation, as Sloan saw. This "art" falls into a no-man's land of art history, and is not discussed, for instance, in Taft's history of photography in America. It was widely practiced, however, being exactly suited to popular taste.<sup>8</sup>

Junius Sloan remained in Erie until the first of July, 1863, painting busily, partaking of what cultural life the town afforded. His account-books and letters show rather completely both the cultural and the economic situation for an artist in an inland place of this size at the time. It had no art to show him — exhibitions like the contemporary ones organized in Utica by Thomas Wood required some unusual person, with an unusual interest in art, to inspire them — although he could see an occasional exhibition by going to Buffalo. But Erie had its share of the lyceum-culture of the times, and he followed these lectures. Thus, in the winter of 1862-63, for example, he went to hear Dr. Josiah G. Holland, the medico turned writer, whose "Titcomb's Letters to Young People, Single and Married" (collected in 1858) had put him in great demand as a lecturer; he was careful not to miss John B. Gough, the famous temperance lecturer, whose career from drunkard to reformer would have made him doubly interesting to anyone connected with Platt R. Spencer, who had been conspicuous in exactly the same way; he enjoyed the humor of Artemis Ward, whose tickets were the cheapest; and he listened to the more serious discourse of Henry Ward Beecher. He visited the "War Rolemarama" that came to town in April. Add to these a little reading, — and the rest of the cultural activities of the place could be summed up in two words: much talk. In April he wrote his wife that he had much work engaged for and had acquired "a little local reputation"; and in one of his habitual modesty this doubtless means that he was as successful as the average painter could expect to be in such localities. The cash income in such cases would be almost meaningless to moderns. Assuming that he was careful to enter in his account-books all the cash he received, his cash income in 1863 was \$617.60. Against this must be set the fact that, according to his accounts, his cash expenditures in the same year were \$377.75. This income varied from year to year, tending to go up in the later 1860's,

<sup>7</sup>Robert Taft, "Photography and the American Scene: A Social History," New York, 1938, pp. 324ff.

<sup>8</sup>James Newman, "The Principles and Practice of Harmonic Coloring in Oil, Water-Color and Photographic Colors," New York, 1859, and Phila., 1866, to which Mr. Beaumont Newhall refers me, contains an account of the technique.

but the highest, during the period covered by the account-books, was \$1080.00, in 1866. (The books do not go into the 1870's, which probably formed his best period financially.) In considering these figures one should remember that even in our days and our money the average annual income (from their art work) of painters in the fine arts in the United States is probably less than \$1500.00.<sup>9</sup>

## II

**A**FTER JULY, 1863, Junius Sloan devoted himself formally to landscape painting. For a long time before that, however, it had occupied much of his attention. Beyond the general reasons for taking up landscape which were operative in the culture of the time, there were other reasons springing from his individual reaction to the problems that confronted him. Some discussion of the factors involved in his choice of landscape, with quotations from his letters, will help appreciate the possible significance of such choices in 19th century America. At the very beginning of his career he had felt the fascination of landscape. Indeed, his decision to extend his first trip so far as Vermont, in 1848, was motivated by this interest. Years later the memory of his first view of the kind of landscape that inspired the American landscape school was fresh in his mind, and was set down in his "Autobiographical Fragment" as follows:

"I think the controlling idea [in going on to Vermont] was to get a view of the mountains, which I had never seen: nor had I but little [*sic*] conception of how they were builded up from the plains below. This was before the days of greatly extended multiplication of pictures, and I had seen but few of what there were, so I had a very erroneous conception of how they would appear; and I confess to some disappointment on the first sight. They not only exceeded, but also fell short of my ideal. They lifted themselves from the contiguous country so differently from what I had expected, less abruptly, and with a more widely spreading base. I remember on the first day's walk from Whitehall to Middlebury that we passed some hills which far exceeded any elevations of land which I had ever seen, the tops of which, upon that cloudy, rainy day, were lost in the low rain-clouds. . . . When, the next day, as we drew near the mountains, the clouds lifted a curtain, and a broad panoramic view of these wondrous creations was revealed to me for the first time in my life, nothing could have made a sight more impressive. The frosts had ripened but not loosened the leaves, so trees were robed in the full gorgeousness of autumn. The breaking clouds let through the sunlight only in places, giving more beauty and mystery. The ten-mile walk of that morning seems like a wonderful dream of beauty. Fatigue, and hunger, and cold, and wet were measurably forgotten."

<sup>9</sup>Elizabeth McCausland, "Careers in the Arts," New York, 1950, (or "Magazine of Art," Jan. 1946).

During the unsettled years that followed, when he had still to get himself established as a portrait painter, he was studying outdoor nature whenever he could. In June, 1851, when he was helping his parents on their farm, he wrote to Robert C. Spencer:

"It requires a good deal of philosophy to leave the easel for days. . . . And yet it does not seem as tho' I had spent the day unprofitably or in vain if I have taken heed to fill in the thousand spare moments in looking at nature — the book from which I study is spread out before me in all places and is always open."

Some contact with books is shown in that he goes on to quote Emerson's remark, "The difference between landscapes is small, but there is a difference in the beholders." He was actually painting landscapes as early as this, for in a letter written from Erie in November, 1851, he tells the same friend of "four sunny landscapes" then in his studio.

For a young man tackling the arts in relative isolation — that is, for one who must consciously think out his attitude on various problems, rather than accepting it naturally from some tradition in which he is growing up — some one question or problem will often be decisive. For Junius Sloan this key problem seems to have been the problem of associations in the visual arts. In 1852 he had a good deal of correspondence with his friend, Robert C. Spencer, about a picture to celebrate Spencer's setting out on married life. Sloan already had a store of landscape drawings and sketches, and he began by getting them out and going through them. He was struck by the fact that the scenes he had drawn fell into two classes: "many scenes which the eye loves to dwell upon," and, "many whose charms could not be interpreted by lines." He then went on to state the principle which he thought this indicated: "For the pleasingness of a scene is in a great measure dependent upon association." His friend urged the importance of something he called "heart-seeing," and Sloan replied, "What is the heart-seeing of which you speak but the association of such and such thoughts with such lines or things?" Thus in subjects for paintings he distinguished clearly between a visual appeal and an appeal due to the associations clustered around the subject by the memory. Having made his position clear, he told his friend that he could imagine doing a picture for him, and outlined one that reminds us of Cole's allegories: but his remarks show that he clearly perceived that this kind of allegory, strictly speaking, would always be external to a work of visual art. Some months later Junius Sloan returned to the problem, and concluded his position as follows:

"You want a something, an expressive something, to shadow forth a feeling. . . . When we were children we used to make pictures and write under

them, 'This is a horse,' 'A vase of flowers,' etc. That was certainly a sure method and led to no mistakes. . . . Since then I have seen pictures which had need of some such underlining. . . . I like this plain-spokenness; if there is hidden meaning, let us be told what it is. [He recalls that in the Chinese theater an actor simply announces that he is in a given city.] This has presented itself to me as the only plausible means of getting thro' the present difficulty, i. e. paint a something, and where the meaning is doubtful supply the deficiency by writing it out."

This solution can be called typically American (though not to the exclusion of others), as it expresses so completely a typical cultural situation, and its characteristics should be noted: First the questioning of traditional procedure, in which both a degree of cultural isolation and a clear-sighted perception of artificial or unessential factors in the old solution are involved; then the formulation of a solution by a use of a logic that is clear and practical, though not conspicuous for subtlety; and finally there is the bit of distant culture, acquired in a purely verbal manner — here the trait from the Chinese theatre, dropped into Sloan's mind, in the Lake Erie region so far from its origin, by some book or some lyceum lecturer.

Some ten years later, after two different periods spent in New York City, Junius Sloan did not object so completely to allegorical or literary meaning, but his reactions show that a certain separation between figure painting and landscape had taken place in his view of himself. He visited an exhibition in Buffalo in February, 1863, and wrote to his wife concerning a figure painting:

"A picture by Oertel, called *The Captive Soul*, as a piece of figure drawing, sweet coloring, and apt expression, is one of the gems of the gallery. . . . A life-size figure, nude to the loins, one hand chained to a rock, and the other raised beseechingly to heaven. Uprturned face and eyes with an expression of unutterable longing for release. Not impatience, not restless straining at the fetters which bind, for that hand is at rest and the chain hangs loosely from the wrist and rests upon the rock. A skull is at her feet, but I cannot express the signification of it. . . . What the artist had in mind I know not, nor how others are affected by and view the picture, but as I saw it today, and as I see it tonight in my mind's eye, it is a fitting and significant expression of the longing the Christian feels for release and rest.<sup>10</sup>

Although the interpretation that occurred to him for this picture was doubtless as justified as any that might be made, there is a definite undercurrent of doubt in his words; he was far from sure that his interpretation would be accepted by others, and we feel that he had entered a disclaimer of

<sup>10</sup>Johannes A. Oertel (1823-1909). See Mantle Fielding, "Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers," Phila., 1926; and Thieme-Becker, "Allgemeine Lexikon der Bildenden Kunstler," XXV (1931). Tuckerman merely mentions him. A pupil of Cornelius, Oertel came to the United States in 1848, and was known for Christian subjects. *The Captive Soul* was doubtless similar in style to his *Rock of Ages*, now in the Saint Gregory Seminary, Cincinnati (on loan from the Cincinnati Art Museum).



competence in this particular field. We notice, however, that in the case of a landscape in the same exhibition, to be discussed below, he did not hesitate to say of the wavelets in it that they, "with low murmurs lovingly kiss the beach," although this quality must have been about as external to the waves as the longing for release was to the figure in Oertel's painting. He felt competent to assess meanings in regard to nature where he lacked confidence in regard to human beings, and this was a factor in his choice of landscape as his field. Thus, in addition to the cultural isolation of his early situation, there were personal factors involved in his choice; a more active interest in people and the world of affairs could have led an artist so situated to work on in portrait, and toward figure painting; but, rather than with people and the problems associated with them, Junius Sloan preferred dealing with nature. There he found simple verities which he felt he could understand, instead of the complex ideas and disturbing conduct of human beings; there he found a sense of eternity, instead of the bustle and struggle which, in an early letter, he set down as the characteristic of the world of men.

During this period he was also giving his attention to more purely pictorial questions. He valued color highly, but decided that drawing was equally fundamental. Something of his experience along these lines is seen in letters to Platt Spencer in 1854 and 1856. The latter's son, Lyman, wanted to become an artist, and Sloan urged:

I would caution him not to give up the pencil and crayon entirely for the brush and colors. Color is the Circe of art; and it is so much more pleasant to work with it that the pencil is apt to be neglected, much to the artist's detriment as a draftsman.

I cannot tell why using colors blinds one, nor is it a fact that will be readily believed until experience has proven it to be so in each individual case. I hardly believed it. . . . Well, at last I gradually awakened, and found color had stood me in stead of drawing, gradation, and well-defined light and shade. It's wondrous easy in painting, when one wishes for a certain line and knows not precisely where it should be, to give a sort of guess at it, and by blending conceal the weakness or want of knowledge.

Two years later he was still giving advice for the same young man, and his remarks show something of his approach to the scenes he would make into pictures:

Let him view the same scene at different times, under different lights, and note the effect of light, shade, and reflection, and select the time to represent the scene when the effect of these makes it most pleasing, or shows its characteristic beauties most prominently. A commonplace scene can be filled with poetry and beauty by a watchful observance of these.

Junius Sloan's efforts in landscape from 1860 to 1866 were primarily directed to self-training and to getting himself established somewhere as a

landscape painter. In January, 1860, he and his wife went to New York City for his second stay there; and this time, as letters and account books make clear, his purpose was solely landscape painting. In May of that year, they went on to the Catskill country, remaining there until the end



Fig. 7. J. R. Sloan: Catskill Creek at Leeds, N. Y., 1860

*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

of the year, he painting assiduously around Catskill, Leeds, and Palenville. It was at this time that he formed his basic landscape style. We find it — if we pass over early studies done in a vein of sentimental nature worship or of grubby realism — in the *Catskill Creek at Leeds, N. Y.*, of 1860 (Fig. 7). Here we find the earnest student of nature, naive in placing the fringe of bushes along the bottom of the picture in place of a *repoussoir*, conscientious in the attempt to render the stones of the foreground and the edge of the sod-bank in all their detail, careful in the foliage, which seems painted leaf by leaf. He had of course seen landscape paintings before he painted this one, in New York during his two visits there, in Cincinnati, perhaps in Erie, and this painting by Sloan is cast in the generally realistic form of the landscape painting of the time; but it is too simple,

in a sense too lacking in style to show the influence of another's art. The background is weak, the artist being hardly aware of the possibility of formal relationships between foreground and background. To be so naive and yet so far from folk art is the measure of Junius Sloan's beginning in landscape painting.

At the end of January, 1861, he and his wife returned to New York City, and lived that winter at 193 Prince Street, and cash-books indicate his activities. In February and March he bought tickets and catalogues to the Dusseldorf Gallery and the National Academy Exhibition, and in March he bought several volumes of Ruskin's "Modern Painters," and the same author's "Elements of Perspective." There is no hint of anything like study with another painter; he painted, looked at pictures, read a little, and thought about his art. In landscape he was resolutely self-taught.

Back in the Lake Erie region in the summer, he painted *The Platt R. Spencer Home*, of 1861, a tiny picture, and quite charming. The smaller size prevents the realistic treatment from becoming monotonous; it is more colorful and less laborious than the larger picture of the year before.

After the final two seasons in the portrait studio at Erie, which interrupted his career in landscape, he made the final break with portrait painting in July 1863. He and his wife, now with their first son, spent the summer with her parents, the Spencers, at Geneva, Ohio, and the fall and winter with his at Kewanee, Ill., then moved to Chicago in March, 1864. Chicago, as a growing city, had attracted his attention at the time he came to Illinois with his parents in 1852, and now he chose it as the place in which to establish himself as a landscape painter. They settled in a house at 318 West Harrison Street, and devoted themselves to making a home there — he took out draft insurance promptly, and the next year they bought a "Handbook of Dining" — at least insofar as an active landscapist's life, with its recurring sketching trips, would allow. He took his place professionally with the other artists of Chicago in the public world of the fine arts that was beginning to develop there, four of his paintings appearing in the first auction sale put on by the artists of Chicago, in June, 1864; and another appeared in the exhibition at the Sanitary Fair in June, 1865.<sup>11</sup> In the same month they moved into a studio-apartment in the famous Crosby Opera House, just built; but he was off at once on a tour that occupied the summer and early fall and took him as far as Lake George, his family stopping at the Spencer home in Geneva, Ohio. The summer of

<sup>11</sup>"Catalogue of the First Annual Sale of Paintings by Chicago Artists," Etc., Chicago, 1864, (Cat. Nos. 10, 32, 89, 198). "Catalogue of Paintings, Statuary, Etc., in the Art Department of the Great Northwestern Fair," Etc., Chicago, [1865], (Cat. No. 87).



1866 they spent at his father's home at Kewanee, where he painted a number of pictures of prairie subjects and devoted himself particularly to studies of skies and clouds. These pictures show a marked increase in ease of handling when compared with the *Catskill Creek* of 1860. He was able in



Fig. 8. J. R. Sloan: *Prairie Farm Home*, 1866  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

them to devote himself to bringing out over-all qualities of the scene, as opposed to cataloguing its details, yet to maintain the faithfulness to fact that was a basic part of his attitude. In *Sunrise on the Prairie* of 1866, he presented the prairie shrouded in the damp mists of early morning, with figures in the foreground. More successful perhaps are the daylight scenes. Particularly fine is the *Prairie Farm Home* (Fig. 8), in which he catches simply but effectively the sweep of the prairie country under vast skies freighted with caravans of clouds. The color, tan and russet tones varied with white and blue, renders with equal success the mellow glow of late summer or early fall. Such work is of assured significance as a record of the inhabited prairie landscape attaining the level of a simply expressive art.

As holder of a studio in the Crosby Opera House, and with his work represented in the art gallery of that building, Junius Sloan was very much in the midst of the excitement that attended the activities of the Crosby Opera House Art Association in the summer, fall and winter of 1866-67. This was the most striking event in Junius Sloan's life during these years,

and it very likely played a part in his decision to leave Chicago. The builder and owner of the Opera House, Uranus H. Crosby, had planned it as a kind of center for art and culture. It had a gorgeous gold and blue auditorium for opera and musical concerts, an exhibition gallery with a collection of paintings on public view, studio apartments for rent to artists, shops for the sale of artists' materials, and galleries for the sale of their works.<sup>12</sup> However, the cost had mounted to \$600,000.00 in the inflation due to the war, which had put a severe strain on the owner's financial resources. The Opera House Art Association was a plan to put himself and the Opera House on their feet financially, and was modelled on the Art Union in New York and similar distributions in other cities. In these "associations" each member subscribed a small amount, for which he received an art-print immediately, and also a chance at winning one of a number of paintings to be distributed later in a drawing of lots. Uranus Crosby was apparently a born promoter, with a liking for fun. He had shown his skill in arousing interest the year before, when the Opera House had been opened with a performance of "Il Trovatore"; although the town's most dashing bachelor, he had yet managed to keep secret what lady he would escort to that event, by which means he carried the interest of "the fair sex" in the opening to an almost unbearable pitch of expectancy. Thus, it is not surprising that when he took up the idea of an art association he did so in such a manner as to arouse the interest of people in all walks of life and in all sections of the country, making the first prize, in a magnificent gesture, the Opera House itself. As prizes, after the Opera House, came a series of paintings, beginning with Bierstadt's *Yosemite Valley*, conspicuously valued at \$20,000.00, and including paintings by all the well-known landscapists, as well as figure paintings by Sully, Eastman Johnson, Huntington, Elihu Vedder and Hunt; in particular there were eight landscapes by Junius R. Sloan.<sup>13</sup> These paintings had been collected to establish the art-gallery of the Opera House, which amounted to a public museum, and they thus formed a logical part of the scheme, the primary object of which, frankly recognized in the publicity, was to extricate Mr. Crosby from the difficulties he had sustained in his effort to give America this "temple of the arts." In all 210,000 shares were offered at \$5.00 each, against which 302 prizes were to be set in a public drawing.

<sup>12</sup>J. Seymour Curry, "Chicago: Its History and Its Builders," Chicago, 1912, II, pp. 179ff.; Mary Drummond's memoir, in Caroline Kirkland, "Chicago Yesterdays," Chicago, 1919; and the Chicago newspapers around the time of the opening in April 1865.

<sup>13</sup>"Crosby Opera House Art Association: Its Plan and Objects. Descriptive Catalogue of Over Three Hundred Valuable Premiums to be Distributed Among Subscribers," Chicago, 1866, (Cat. Nos. 49, 56, 158, 180, 203, 268, 272, and 282). See also the Chicago newspapers beginning June 16, 1866. The "Chicago Tribune," Jan. 22, 1867, discusses the "clubs."

The public, reassured by the numerous statements by prominent men east and west vouching for the honesty of the scheme, and by the good wishes sent by groups of artists in Boston, Philadelphia and New York, avidly followed Uranus Crosby's genial promotion. Subscriptions were received from all over the country, and from remote parts of the world. There was a great proliferation of "clubs," in which the members contributed stated amounts, sometimes as low as twenty-five cents, for the purchase of shares, the value of any prizes won to be divided equally among all members of the club. Public excitement ran high as the day of the drawing approached, Chicago was jammed with people, with restaurant and hotel space at a premium, and stores were closed on the day of the drawing, January 21, 1867. The auditorium of the Opera House was packed with a crowd that waited breathlessly as each number was drawn. The Opera House was won by a gentleman of Prairie du Rocher, Mr. Abraham H. Lee, who immediately sold it back to Mr. Crosby for \$200,000.00 amid general satisfaction. Among the winners of the paintings by Junius Sloan one, by a curious irony, was Bierstadt, who won Sloan's *Among the Shandaken Mountains*. Bierstadt's own *Yosemite Valley*, the 2nd prize, and Cropsey's *An American Autumn*, the 3rd prize, drew numbers which had not been sold — for all 210,000 numbers were put in, whether sold or not, against the 302 prizes, so that Mr. Crosby emerged from the affair with the nucleus of a collection still in his possession.<sup>14</sup>

The fact that he was well represented in the collection of the Opera House, as well as occasional references in the newspapers and letters from his patrons indicate that Junius Sloan's art was well appreciated in Chicago by this time. One of his paintings, *October*, excited the comment, "Though unambitious, it is one of the most successful landscapes which has yet been produced here — a quiet bit of water, foliage, and hills in the distance, pervaded with a genuine autumnal repose."<sup>15</sup> In an account of the re-opening of the art gallery in the Opera House, which had been closed for three months after the drawing to allow for replenishment and rearrangement of the collection, we read, "Sloan has a delicious landscape, rather Hart-y in style, and not inferior to the productions of that celebrated artist."<sup>16</sup> C. R. Larabee, of Chicago, wrote him a note saying how pleased he was with a picture of Lake George, for which he had paid

<sup>14</sup>"Crosby Opera House Art Association: Official Report of the Drawing," Chicago, Jan. 30, 1867. Two of Sloan's pictures drew numbers that were "unsold," and they would therefore remain to Mr. Crosby. The names, and places of residence, of the winners of the other six are given, but none of these pictures has been found.

<sup>15</sup>"Chicago Tribune," May 1, 1867: "The Fine Arts."

<sup>16</sup>"Chicago Tribune," May 2, 1867.

\$300.00, and W. A. Galbraith of Erie, wrote to the same effect, both in 1867. Despite these marks of esteem, he left Chicago in the summer of 1867, permanently it would have seemed at the time. Comments in the newspapers held that he left because of insufficient patronage, and regretted the departure of an artist who could paint the landscapes then displayed in gallery windows. One account calls attention to his *Ticonderoga*, declaring, "There is hardly an inch of it that would disgrace the signature of Hart, Durand or Inness."<sup>17</sup> Another columnist praises this picture, "a summer sunset full of sweetness and repose," for its "fidelity, and elaborate attention to detail and harmony of coloring." A third commentator is delighted with his *Woodland Stream*, and supplements his praise with hearty condemnation of the people who buy old pictures, foreign imports, "clotted daubs of dingy brown," following the interested advice of the dealers. Such people, he concludes in disgust, "would not dare to admire a bit of Eden, fresh from the hands of God, on their own responsibility."<sup>18</sup> Although sales lagged behind appreciation, this factor was no doubt exaggerated in these comments, for they are marked by the desire to urge the art public of Chicago to greater efforts, for Sloan as for other artists, by reminding it that it always lost its most promising artists to New York. Comments in family letters show that there were more significant motives for his move. Foremost was his desire to gain more easy access to the Hudson River country. But there was also the desire to try his fortune in the east, beside the famous landscape artists of the country. His works had hung alongside theirs not unsuccessfully, he could feel, in the art collection of the Crosby Opera House; and with them he had been in a sense made equal as their works were submitted impartially to the turn of the wheel, in that crowded auditorium of January 21, where all hopes had been encouraged. New York beckoned. But he wisely left pictures with a dealer in Chicago, where he expected to continue selling his work.

In the summer of 1867, then, he and his family settled in the Hudson Valley, living for a time at Catskill, then at Palenville, with short stays at surrounding points during 1867 and 1868; in the fall of 1868 they moved into a house at Yonkers; and in the summer of 1869 they moved to Hyde Park, where they lived for several years, he making trips to nearby points, including an intensive campaign in Vermont in the summer of 1871, at which time he worked at or around Newbury, Newport, Memphremagog, North Duxbury, Winooski, and visited Middlebury, the goal of his first trip years before. During this time, as his letters show, he was

<sup>17</sup>"Chicago Tribune," May 12, 1867: "The World of Amusement."

<sup>18</sup>"Western Railroad Gazette," June 1, 1867: "Art Matters."



looking forward to living in New York City, and in the fall of 1871 they moved into a house on 88th Street, and remained there for over a year. This period of about five and one-half years, from the summer of 1867 to the beginning of 1873, was the heroic period of his self-training, during which he worked intensively in the classic landscape country of the United States and brought his style to the final development it was to have. In keeping with his purpose in coming east, he sent paintings to exhibitions, in particular to the National Academy, where his *The Hudson River near Staatsburg* appeared in the exhibitions of spring and of summer, 1871.<sup>19</sup> The same picture appeared in the fall of that year in the exhibition of the Brooklyn Art Association, and the next year his *East River near Hell Gate* appeared there.<sup>20</sup> Five of his paintings figured, along with works by all the leading American artists, in the auction sale of the "American Collection of Paintings," held in New York in the spring of 1873.<sup>21</sup>

He had paintings on sale in eastern galleries during this time; at least we hear, in family correspondence, of some in Smith's gallery in Washington, D. C., and in Bogardus' Picture and Sale Gallery in New York; but he sold his paintings chiefly in Chicago. For instance, his dealer, R. E. Moore, wrote him, in 1867, telling of the sale of his painting, *Ticonderoga*, to George M. Pullman, for \$229.00; and Sloan's account-books carry an entry of \$200.00 for it, the \$29.00 apparently being the dealer's commission! Other letters show that such sales continued while he was in the east. The pictures sold in Chicago through 1871, as well as those stored there or left in the dealer's hands, would have been destroyed in the great fire of that fall, but a number of works of the period 1867-73 were in his studio in the east and remain today.

Sloan's work, at the beginning of these years, is represented by the *Fall Morning on Lake George* (Fig. 9), painted late in 1867.<sup>22</sup> It has the interest of a naive attempt at a great landscape, as distinguished from an attempt merely to get a large scene on the canvas. He works out from the foreground carefully, as if measuring the distance along the ground with rocks and trees as markers. There is no emphasis on the separation of foreground

<sup>19</sup>"Catalogue of the 46th Annual Exhibition, National Academy," New York, 1871, (Cat. No. 163); and "Catalogue of the 2nd Summer Exhibition," 1871, (also No. 163).

<sup>20</sup>"Catalogue of the Works of Art Exhibited at the 23rd Reception of the Brooklyn Art Association, Nov. 27, 1871" (Cat. No. 44); and, the same, for the 25th Reception, Dec. 9, 1872, (Cat. No. 68).

<sup>21</sup>"The American Collection of Paintings. Two Hundred of the Latest and Best Works of Our Most Esteemed Artists. . . . The Somerville Art Gallery, 82 Fifth Avenue." . . . New York, 1873, (Cat. Nos. 3, 26, 88, 105, and 182). No. 105, to judge by the title, *Near Staatsburg, Hudson River*, is probably the same picture he had exhibited at the National Academy and at Brooklyn. The Collection was in charge of R. E. Moore, Sloan's former dealer in Chicago.

<sup>22</sup>Frederick A. Sweet, "The Hudson River School," (catalogue of the exhibition), Chicago, 1945, No. 151. A drawing of the scene is found in one of Sloan's sketch books.

from middle-distance, and there are few "incidents" on the way back. Thus the picture as a whole lacks the interest that would come from a stronger division into parts and the contrast of these parts with one another, although there are interesting bits marked by lanes or shadows and enclosed



Fig. 9. J. R. Sloan: *Fall Morning on Lake George*, 1867  
Sloan Collection, Chicago

by trees. The background of the scene, indeed the whole scene, is spread out on the canvas broadly, without any emphasis on depth where objects overlap. He has instinctively assumed that the aim of landscape painting is to present nature as a panorama, simplified, clarified slightly, but essentially a broad presentation of what meets the eye; and the chief relationships indicated are from side to side and up and down the canvas; direct relationships in depth are minimized. It is instructive to compare this painting with one made from a strikingly similar scene along the Rhine by Worthington Whittredge and called *Drachenfels*.<sup>23</sup> There is in Whittredge's picture a definitely greater emphasis on the intervals in depth between the overlapping hills, and more interest is obtained from incidents created by the placing of the forms, strengthened by contrasts in value or lighting. Thus Sloan's *Fall Morning on Lake George* is a beginning on a

<sup>23</sup>Wayside Museums, Harvard, Mass. See Clara Endicott Sears, "Highlights Among the Hudson River Artists, Boston," 1947, pl. 48; also Whittredge's "Autobiography" (published in the "Brooklyn Museum Journal," 1942). This *Drachenfels*, signed and dated, "T. W. Whittredge, 1850," apparently does represent a scene at Drachenfels, although not the one which Whittredge says he made into a picture.

more complex problem, and is, on the whole, less successful than the prairie pictures. The purplish rose tone, introduced to render the frosty light of a fall morning, is hardly integrated, and remains primarily a descriptive element. A large, undated picture, *Kaaterskill Lake* (Sloan Coll. 464), seems to be a continuation of this effort, perhaps of two or three years later. Scene and treatment are similar, but he succeeds in making incidents out of the rocks and trees of the foreground, and the sky is quite fine; the treatment of the background hills, however, is still weak. However, by about 1870 his work had passed beyond the tentative character seen in these pictures and had attained the greater ease already found in the prairie subjects.

Junius Sloan worked assiduously during this time, the crucial years of his self-training, filling his notebooks with drawings in pencil and watercolor, painting broad and rapid studies, finishing other pictures more deliberately in the studio. Although small in size, the landscape with a covered wagon, of 1871, which he inscribed, "Memory of Vermont" (Fig. 11), is quite finished and can stand for the finished pictures of this time. Compact and dramatic, it preserves effectively, even if painted in the studio, the original impression of nature in a stormy mood. Such pictures show that he had mastered his style in landscape painting, and was now able to express what he could see in nature, without awkwardness or excessive detail.

His style developed to its mature form, Junius Sloan and his family returned to Chicago in the fall of 1873, this time to settle there permanently. An illness and a slight stroke had interrupted his work; perhaps he had been disappointed at not obtaining more recognition for his pictures exhibited in New York; and in any case members of his family, the Sloans, were still established in Illinois and Chicago, and had always urged that his place, and his best opportunity, lay there. Thus permanently settled in his career, there is no need to give a circumstantial account of the rest of his life. We shall note certain general features only, specifically something as to where he found material for his paintings, the position he occupied as a landscape painter in Chicago, and the method of selling his pictures in the latter part of his life.

They took a house on Morgan Street in Chicago, in the section dominated by the spire of the Second Baptist Church, and when they were settled he took a separate studio "downtown," first in the Ashland Block in 1874-75; then, for some years, in the American Merchant's Express Building, which, originally designed by H. H. Richardson and only recently completed, was the finest commercial building in Chicago at the time, much favored by artists for its large windows. He no longer made a point of going to the Hudson Valley for study, although on several trips east, to

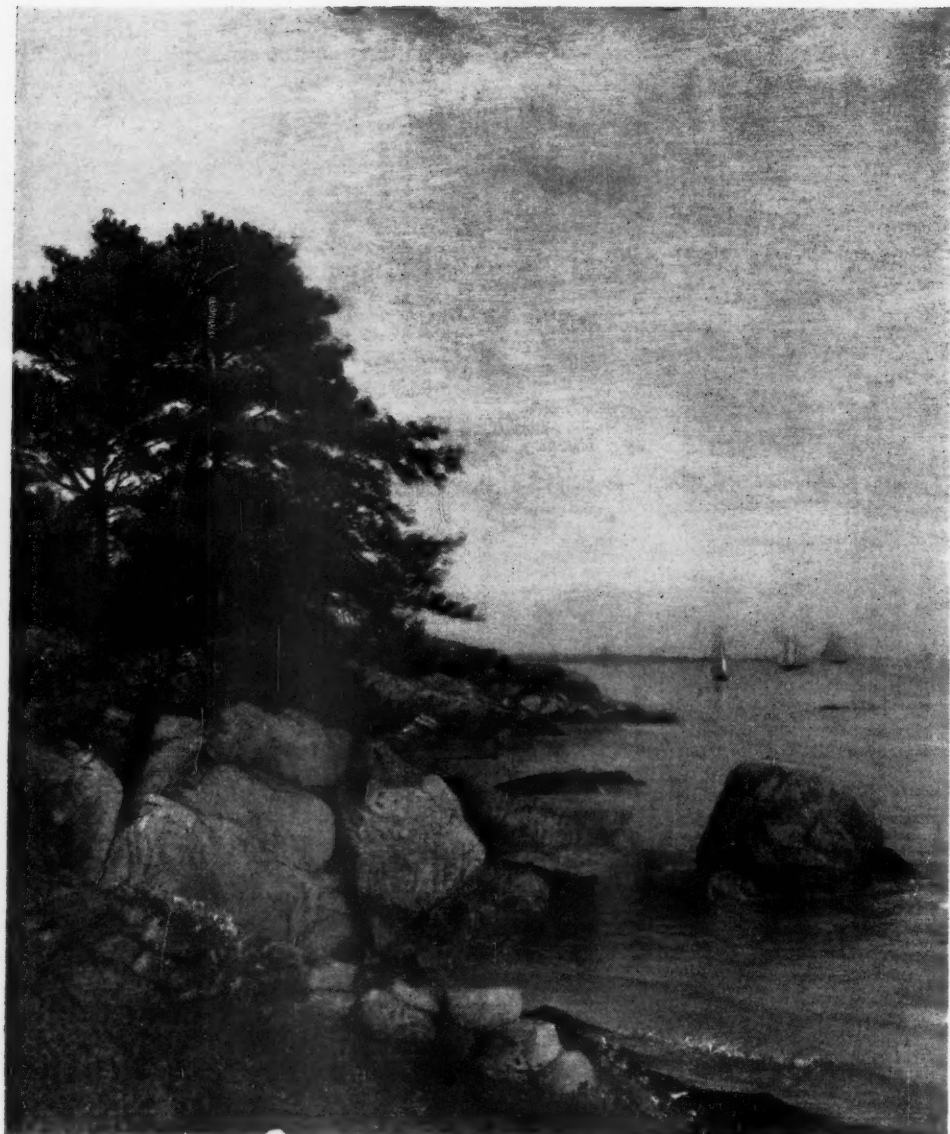


Fig. 10. J. A. Suydam: Beverly Rock, c. 1860  
*National Academy, New York*

do paintings on commission for westerners who wanted views of earlier family haunts, he took the occasion to revisit scenes of earlier study and make additional sketches, as in 1879, when he worked at Lake George and again visited Middlebury, Vermont, and in 1891 when he went to Connecticut. His regular summer sketching expeditions to collect new material were made rather in the Middle West, to Kewanee in 1874, to Milwaukee in 1875, in the country around Chicago in 1877, at





Fig. 11. J. R. Sloan: *Memory of Vermont*, 1871

*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

Lake Geneva, Wis., in 1878, to Rochester, Minn., in 1880, to Princeton, Ill., in 1883, where he conducted a class organized by the daughters of the Judge Taylor whose portrait he had painted long before, to Baraboo, Wis., in 1885, 1886, 1887, and again in 1892. He maintained a leading position among the landscape painters of Chicago, to judge by occasional references in the newspapers. Thus in the fall of 1875 a report on what could be expected in the way of landscape painting during the coming

season gave high praise to two pictures in his studio. In the fall of 1878, in connection with a loan exhibition arranged for the benefit of Christ Church, he is mentioned as holding the "first rank" among Chicago landscape painters; and his *Woodland Pasture* is mentioned as among the paintings exciting "most comment" in the annual exhibition of the Chicago Society of Artists in 1892.<sup>24</sup> A charter member of the latter organization, formed in the 1880's, he exhibited regularly in its exhibitions, and also in the exhibitions which were a regular part of the Interstate Industrial Exposition, an annual event which furnished the chief public exhibitions of art in Chicago between the burning of the Crosby Opera House and the opening of the present Art Institute; occasionally he was represented in the exhibitions of the latter at the end of his life. Sometimes he had a picture on display in the east, at least we hear in family letters of one in Bogardus' Gallery in New York in 1879, and he was represented in the exhibition of the Brooklyn Art Association in 1884 by a water-color, *Lake St. Croix, Minnesota*.<sup>25</sup>

During this time his manner of marketing pictures changed from the use of dealers, with which he had become dissatisfied, to direct relation with the purchasers. He had a clientele, changing doubtless with the years but persisting into the nineties, who bought when they wanted a picture to hang or a gift for some occasion. Keeping a studio in a downtown building made this manner of selling fairly easy. This arrangement is shown clearly in a letter of his wife to Mrs. Henry Isham, of 1878, which runs in part:

Mr. Sloan's studio is Room 30, American Express Building, No. 78 Monroe St. He receives visitors from ten o'clock in the morning, and at this season until five o'clock in the evening, and any day but Saturday.

Yourself and family and friends are very cordially invited to call, and as frequently as agreeable. Should you respond to this invitation, and should you while looking among the studies behold also "the dust of the ages," I entreat you be not dismayed or disenchanted; for verily the artist believes in the aesthetics as well as the "ethics of the dust," and would abide in his belief peacefully.

During the whole of this period he supplemented his income from sale of pictures by teaching. He usually had a few private pupils, more rarely a class. During the '70's his wife taught penmanship in various of the seminaries of the time; and occasionally Junius Sloan was drawn into these seminaries to teach art. During that decade her name appears in the catalogues of the Chicago Athenaeum, Kenwood Seminary, Gleason's Academy, The Misses Grant's Seminary; and Junius Sloan's name is found in

<sup>24</sup>"The Appeal," Nov. 15, 1878; "Chicago Evening News," Nov. 8, 1892.

<sup>25</sup>"Catalogue of the Water-Colors, Brooklyn Art Association, March 1884," Brooklyn, 1884 (Cat. No. 6).

the catalogue of the latter institution for 1879-80, as director of the art department and with the title of professor, as well as in an undated catalogue of the same period of the Park Institute. Thus they succeeded in maintaining a home in one way or another — the wife's earnings doubtless were partly applied to this, although they were largely saved for a publishing venture that she had in mind — and they were aided, at the end of the artist's life, by the contribution of their son, Percy. For many years they lived on West Adams Street, but in the middle '90's they moved into the house that Percy built overlooking Humboldt Park, at 666 (now 1307) North California Avenue. Designed by their nephew, Robert B. Spencer, Jr., and thus forming part of the new "Chicago School" of architecture, it had a studio-gallery built into it for the use of the artist. Here he painted during the rest of his life — except for the last months; for the fascination with landscape, which drove him, like other artists of this school, to follow nature over so many miles of country, was not in the end to let him die peacefully in this home.

### III \*

HAVING NOTED the significant features of Junius Sloan's career as an artist, we turn now to some discussion of the general character and significance of his work, and of the influences under which it was formed. His developed art can perhaps be called Romantic Realism. There were two tendencies in it which, although of unequal importance, were both characteristic, and they can be seen clearly in the contrast between two paintings of the 1870's, both fully finished exhibition pictures. *On the Winooski River* (Fig. 12), of 1878, can stand for his most characteristic achievement in landscape painting. Despite changes in scale and detail, it has the same general construction of the scene and a similar placing of the chief vertical accent as found in the *Catskill Creek at Leeds*, (Fig. 7), of eighteen years earlier. However, the manner in which it is handled raises *On the Winooski River* far above the other as an achievement. It is painted much more broadly, the color is richer, and more effectively related to the objects, the space is not cut off so suddenly by a cardboard-like mountain range, the mountains being kept farther back, with more variety of ground forms leading to them; and the cloud-forms in the sky are more interesting and echo the mountains effectively. Most important, the transitions are more flexibly handled and, together with the atmospheric and color effects, are adjusted to a more developed feeling, so that the chief content of the picture becomes the general character of this slightly misty, peaceful valley, rather than a catalogue of its

parts. The picture thus reaches a quite respectable level of art as a simple expression of the appealing qualities found in natural scenery. The other picture, *Lake George* (Fig. 13), of 1879, represents an attempt at a more ideal mood of grandeur or mystery, and as such represents a small minority



Fig. 12. J. R. Sloan: *On the Winooski River*, 1878  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

of Sloan's pictures. In it the counterplay of movement between foreground and background suggests a large-scale design of some interest, but this promise is not realized, being insufficiently developed or supported by other incidents; moreover, the contrast in color between foreground and background further weakens the total design, for the muted red-orange and bluish tones of the mountains are not related to the rather intense green of the foreground; and the result is not only a break in the visual form, but even from the point of view of representation the result is not very convincing, the mountains seeming to exist in a different world. Thus *On the Winooski River* is more successful, with more convincing rendering of objects and more effective color, and it suggests that the hidden effort which it cost Sloan to adopt a more idealistic approach hindered, in cases like the *Lake George*, the achievement of which he was capable. The sense of fact — to borrow a phrase from C. R. Morey's classic survey of American sculpture — was too ingrained to allow him to work successfully

in an idealistic approach.<sup>26</sup> For Sloan, as an American artist, fealty to nature was the price of success.

Junius Sloan essayed this more idealistic approach only occasionally. One other decided example remains, in his developed or later work, *Gem*



Fig. 13. J. R. Sloan: Lake George, 1879  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

in the *Mountains*, of 1882, recalling the *Lake George*. (Parts of it have been painted up in recent days.) Alongside the taste for realism there existed in the American public a taste for an idealistic, or at least a conventionally sentimental, treatment of landscape, and this taste would have suggested such pictures to any artist. The form it took in the average buyer of pictures can be seen in the comments of one Vesper Dorneck, of Chicago, who had purchased a pair of Sloan's landscapes, *Morning* and *Evening*, and who wrote him in 1870 about these pictures:

"The dewey freshness of morning and the dreamy repose of early evening are perfectly rendered; and I sit down to the contemplation of that soft, sail-dotted water with its stretch of sun-kissed hills, — and rest, and lose myself in dreams."

The average person doubtless fed this sentimentality, without discrimination, in realistic equally as in idealistic pictures, and would not constitute

<sup>26</sup>Frank Jewett Mather, Charles Rufus Morey, and William James Henderson, "The American Spirit in Art," New Haven, 1927.



a very strong pressure toward an idealistic treatment of landscape; but there were other representatives of such a taste, more perspicacious and less easily satisfied, who urged the idealistic approach. This is shown by a letter from Sloan's dealer in Chicago, also written in 1870, which is quoted here in full for the light it throws on these currents of taste:

Dear Sir,

I have now three of your pictures on exhibition, — two new ones just received from your brother. (The frames for the small one will be finished soon.) I am expecting to get off one of these large pictures very soon, probably the old one.

The *Hunter Mountain* is very much admired particularly by the artists in this building, and they all think it a great advance in feeling and execution, indeed, no one has objected to any part of it; it makes a good show and lights up well. I have this picture on an easel in a large room with many other pictures by Moran, Willis, Hamilton, Ruggles, Cropsey, Voght, [another name, illegible], Murray, and others, lighted from four plate-glass windows, and it certainly looks very well, and attracts attention.

I have a few words to say in regard to your manner of making pictures. I would advise you to make no more portraits of localities. Particular patches of nature are not generally interesting. It strikes me that you paint too well to continue in your old path any longer. I would like you to examine carefully the finest compositions of the masters (Turner in the *Rivers of France*, for instance), and then sit down before your canvas, so to speak, and dream, and perhaps let your soul guide your pencil in a few graceful strokes which may compose a landscape of great breadth and distance with sufficient room for clouds and sunlight and shadows arranged in a broad and simple manner. Then, from your studies and knowledge of nature, finish the picture quickly and put it on the market. Such pictures sell! You need not be afraid of "outraging nature," for you cannot possibly produce an effect that nature will not duplicate. I would have you hereafter select effects from Nature to complete your picturesque dreams. Conceive a composition first, and then paint it as well as you can. I believe this will be the best way for you to do. You have attained a power of execution which will keep you from going very far astray. Our young artist in this building paints in this way (from my suggestion), and, although he cannot begin to execute as correctly as you do, he is filled with orders. The people want warm and sunny pictures of great breadth and distance, to harmonize with the prevailing mode of decoration of rooms. Your last picture is a great step in advance.

Let us have soon a large canvas and an *Ideal Landscape*, executed with what power you have. There is room for such a picture in Chicago.

Forgive this singular letter, and believe me, as ever, your friend,

R. E. Moore

This advice must have been received with mixed feelings by the artist. His belief in "beauty," and at least some tendency to an idealistic expression, which is seen in some of his earliest landscape sketches, would have made him receptive. But his stronger tendency to realism, reinforced by

other influences — the very un-Ruskinian tone of the letter would have been opposed by Ruskin's own words, in the "Modern Painters," which Sloan already owned, — held him to the more realistic approach. A later note, dated June 20, 1871, shows that Mr. Moore was in the end willing to acquiesce in this:

Dear Sir,

Your little gems have been received, [and] the small one will be in its frame by Monday. They will sell as soon as anything in my fine collection. Pictures are very slow here at present. I shall have a reception early in February. Several persons have especially noticed your last three works, let us hope for the sale of them.

You are constantly improving in feeling and execution, and I think your works will soon become as much praised as those of any of our artists. No one but Kensett paints such exquisite skies as you have given us.

Several persons have remarked a lack of power or contrast in your compositions, or perhaps they would like to see more effort at pictorial arrangement.

However, you must work out your own ideas.

Very truly yours,

R. E. Moore.

*On the Winooski River*, already discussed, and other pictures of the 1870's, painted after the date of these letters, show how he carried his art forward, and largely in realistic vein. Occasionally in the 1880's he achieved greater variety in the arrangement of the usual elements, as in the *Fountainkill Creek*, of 1881, where there is a somewhat more effective progression in depth than is usual in his style. Such works represent the farthest point to which Sloan carried his landscape art, and they stand clearly in the realistic group. Sloan's art would thus support the traditional view, that the pervasive tendency of American art was toward the realistic and factual.

But if Junius Sloan's best art was based very closely on nature, it cannot be called an entirely objective or detached realism. Even in his most realistic works there is always another factor, denoting some significance attached by him to the scene, which was to justify the picture. This factor varies in obviousness. At times it is noticeable enough to be called a literary or, perhaps better, a verbal factor. Thus, in a picture, *High Rocks at Sunset*, of 1877, there was clearly a verbal formulation in the artist's mind — something like, "How dramatic the contrast between the dark rocks below and the glowing sky above," — which accompanied or preceded the visual formulation of what the picture was to be and which determined the over-all treatment. In this case it seriously compromised the formal unity of the picture, because of the strong and unbridged contrast between these two parts. Most often, however, this verbal factor was not so ob-

vious and did not have so adverse an effect on the form. In Sloan's most successful paintings, the quietly realistic works like *On the Winooski River* or *Fountainkill Creek*, this factor exists in a very diffused manner; but it is always present, at the very least in the conception, "beauty of nature." For the scenes are always chosen, not merely for themselves, nor for the structure in them, but for their exemplification of beauty. It is probably impossible for a member of the younger generations today to realize how thoroughly the concept, "beauty," dominated the mind of an artist like Sloan. It gave to straightforward depictions a meaning and significance which, for the artist as for sympathetic observers, raised these works far above the status of transcripts of "particular patches of nature;" and it joined with the concept, "nature," to furnish complete satisfaction from works which to us seem incomplete as visual forms. It thus played a part in the appreciation of the work of art like that played today by such concepts as "form," or "design," which allow a modern observer to find works completely satisfactory which to Sloan and his society would have seemed grievously lacking in meaning. Thus we cannot afford to dismiss too cavalierly the older approach; but it is fair to say that in Sloan's art the idea, "beauty," attached to the scene as a whole and giving it value, to some extent stands between the artist and his material, absorbs in part the energy which might otherwise have been devoted to investigation of what was interesting in it as visual form.

It is important to note that this shortcoming is not peculiar to Junius Sloan, but is a characteristic of American landscape painting of the time. The importance given to some verbal factor — whether it led to conceiving the pictures as records of interesting geographic spots, or demonstrations of the grandeur or purity of American scenery, or mystical communions with God in nature, or simply as exemplars of beauty — was the chief means, whatever the ultimate causes, of barring American landscape painting from a greater achievement in the more generalized values of pictorial form. Thus Sloan's work stands up very well when compared with the general achievement of the school. It has the same kind of meaning, and as art it is not altogether inferior to that of men like Cropsey, Casilear, Huntington, or C. H. Moore. It is more modest in spirit, less given to mannerisms; thus it seems less individual; but neither does it have the empty exaggerations that mark their work. His use of color is in general more effective than Moore's; he does not use light in the superficial and showy manner of Huntington or Casilear; he does not attempt the *pastiches* that Cropsey sometimes produced. His work gives us 19th century American landscape painting in its simplest and most direct form.



#### IV

SUCH COMPARISONS lead to the question of the exact relation of Junius Sloan to other artists in regard to learning. How did an unschooled artist arrive at this point? Just what is the meaning of the term "self-taught" in such a case?

Sloan's art is so typical of American landscape of the 19th century that one at first expects to find parallels that would show which of the leaders of the school he based his style upon. But when one begins to compare, such expected parallels retreat into a general similarity of attitude toward nature and landscape painting, and a consequent general similarity of style and treatment. More specific parallels can be found with the work of certain minor artists, however. He spent the winter of 1857-58 in Daniel Huntington's studio in New York, and thus very likely would have seen Huntington's work at a formative time; and some of his earlier studies feature large rocks in the foreground which, in shape and rendering are like Huntington's, and the rather atrocious paint could be due to an attempt to reproduce something of Huntington's treatment of light and color, like that seen in his (later) *Chocurua Peak* (New York Historical Society). However, Huntington's rather superficial light on rock and tree and the larger part given to recession in space are not like Sloan's work. His work is closer to Casilear as seen in the latter's *River Scene, Catskill* (New York Historical Society), of 1861, in which the setting of the mountains in respect to the foreground and middle distance is much like Sloan's work, as is also the handling of depth. A progression in from each side of the picture, in a kind of shallow stage-wing effect, the "wings" painted in a simplified realistic way and without much separation indicated between them, is typical of Sloan, and Casilear's picture is quite similar in this respect. Sloan's contemporaries in Chicago were fond of comparing his work to that of William Hart, and some of Hart's work is close to Sloan's, for instance his *Cattle in a Stream*.<sup>27</sup> Here the general arrangement and the dramatic effect are like Sloan's *Memory of Vermont*, (Fig. 11). We have already noted the similarity between one of Sloan's pictures (Fig. 9), and one of Whittredge's; but Whittredge's work is in the end quite different from Sloan's.

There is no need to multiply parallels of this kind. What they show is that Sloan's work is close to that of men like Casilear and Hart. Despite the general similarity to the work of Kensett, or even to the studies or smaller pictures of Bierstadt, there is no noteworthy correspondence with

<sup>27</sup>Wayside Museums, Harvard, Mass. Illustration in Sears, pl. 60.

the work of any of the more famous artists; their influence on him, important enough, was hardly more than a general stimulus toward adopting the form of landscape painting used by the school as a whole; and if we want to find the instances of specific contact which we must assume always mediate an artist's development, we must pass beyond even the minor masters already mentioned to artists who have been forgotten for years. Perhaps unnecessary if it were only a question of Junius Sloan, this will serve our general purpose of contributing to a more concrete knowledge of the growth and diffusion of art in America.

The specific artists who had the most to give Sloan are suggested in the important letter to his wife of February 12, 1863, already referred to. This letter records, among other things, his impressions of an exhibition of paintings which he had just seen in Buffalo. Two landscapes particularly impressed him. One was by Hubbard, a painting which Sloan thought he had seen before, at the National Academy in 1861.<sup>28</sup> He characterized it as follows:

"A framework of russet, scarlet, and yellow hills slope [sic] down to and almost encircle a placid sleeping lake, which is only less luminous than the palpitating, almost clear afternoon sky from which the light is borrowed. In the near foreground at the corner of the picture on a low beach are some figures, and still further in the corner, a group of trees, birch, hemlock and others. It is wondrously beautiful and autumnal. The sketch will give you hardly a faint idea of it. The coloring so impressed me that I have but a dim recollection of the outlines and details."

In the absence of this picture there are others that allow us to see Hubbard's style. One in the National Academy, *Twilight*, is close to Sloan, although the technique is more obvious and descriptive. However there is a charming little picture by Hubbard, *Bend in the Road*, in the collection of Dr. T. Wood Clarke, of Utica, which was originally acquired by Thomas Wood in connection with the exhibitions which he organized in Utica in the 1860's, and which therefore represents Hubbard's style of this time. It is in some ways close to Sloan's work. It has a golden tonality, which Sloan did not adopt, but the trees are rendered in the same manner as in Sloan's work, and there are heavy darks in foliage and shadows that recall the heavy greens used by Sloan.

<sup>28</sup>Richard W. Hubbard (1817-88). See Tuckerman, "Book of the Artists" (1867, and 2nd ed., 1882); also Clement and Hutton, "Artists of the 19th Century" (1879), Champlin's "Cyclopaedia of Painters and Painting" (1892), and Fielding's "Dictionary," cited above. A pupil of Morse and Huntington, Hubbard had also studied in France, and was elected to the National Academy in 1858. Of the works he exhibited at the National Academy in 1861, the *Lake Dunmore* (Cat. No. 343) may have been the picture Sloan describes; it appeared also in the exhibition at Buffalo; see the Buffalo Fine Art Academy's "Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture Exhibited at the Academy's Gallery," Buffalo, 1862, (Cat. No. 47).

The other painting was by Suydam.<sup>29</sup> Sloan was sure he had seen it nearly two years before, at the National Academy in 1861, and he now found it,

"Just as crispy, fresh and sweet as ever. It is the moon rising over the sea, the waters of which come in gentle wavelets, and with low murmurs lovingly kiss the beach. The sketch below will assist in calling it to remembrance, though I have no doubt it is still fresh in your mind. Even the remembrance of 'a thing of beauty is a joy forever.'"

This picture by Suydam was probably his *Twilight on the Beverly Shore*, which has disappeared today. However, it must have been very similar in style and treatment to his *Beverly Rock* (Fig. 10), which draws upon the same locality for its subject matter, and which was painted at about the same time, since it came into the possession of the National Academy in 1861. It is closer to Sloan's style than the work of any other artist. The application of paint is similar, as is the rendering of trees and rocks; and there is the same contrast of rather heavy green foliage against the sky. As in Hubbard's *Bend in the Road*, there is a pervasive glow, although it is more gentle, and suggests a more meditative enjoyment of the quiet of nature. These paintings are so close to Sloan's work that we can feel sure they reveal the specific artists whose work helped him, insofar as he was aided by specific artists. Their style differs from his chiefly in the slightly greater richness or variety of the color-areas, and in the presence of a glow which is not found in Sloan's work. Their work is therefore a little more flexible and sophisticated, his work a little more direct. They seem to direct the attention somewhat more to the artistic treatment given nature; Sloan's work directs it rather to nature itself. He is not quite so much a "tonal" realist as they. His developed work shows the closeness of their styles, as well as these differences; and the change from his early work shows how he was aided, we must assume, by sight of these or similar paintings.

In this letter Sloan mentioned the work of other artists seen in this exhibition — Le Clear, Beard, McEntee, Whittredge, Leutze, Huntington, Matthews, and Bierstadt — and doubtless these were the men he thought of as important; but it was to the work of Suydam and Hubbard that his instinct most powerfully drew him. Not only did their way of rendering nature bring out the qualities that he felt to be significant and beautiful, but, perhaps more important, these paintings revealed a mood that Sloan too sought, and they suggested artistic personalities that echoed his own.

<sup>29</sup>James A. Suydam (1819-65). See the 19th century references cited above, n. 28. After travel abroad, he worked with Durand and Kensett, and was elected to the National Academy in 1861. For the few paintings known by him today, see John I. H. Baur, "Tonal Realist: James Suydam," in the "Art Quarterly," XIII (1950), pp. 221-27. He exhibited the *Twilight on the Beverly Shore* at the National Academy in 1861 (Cat. No. 462). No entry for Suydam occurs in the catalogue of the exhibition in Buffalo, although Sloan is very definite about seeing one.

These three artists all sought the aspects of nature that are revealed in quietness, whether the more elegiac mood of Suydam, the more robustly poetic one of Hubbard, or Junius Sloan's somewhat more straightforward telling of nature's story; and the sketches of Suydam's and Hubbard's lives given by Tuckerman suggest personalities similar to Sloan's, abounding in phrases like disregard of worldly success, absence of affectation, conscientious devotion to truth, simplicity of aim, and quiet but serious feeling. Doubtless Sloan sensed this community of attitude in their work, aided in this by personal contact with at least one of these artists, for a letter from Hubbard remains, of 1865, which suggests a friendly relationship kept up for some time.

There were apparently no further contacts of anything like this importance with the work of other artists. The incident, however, allows us to see what the phrase "self-taught" meant in Sloan's case, and what it must always have meant. If given any very significant meaning it is misleading, for it did not mean that he had no help from others. He got very important help, from the school as a whole, and from specific artists; but he got it, as any artist does, by contact with their achievements at a moment when he could see something in them. The statement, "Nature was my only teacher," which he made at the end of his life, was thus essentially incorrect, although it was not made with intent to deceive. It meant simply that he did not take lessons in landscape from any other painter, nor attend classes in an art school. Sloan recognized the fact of real help, however, for in the same letter he concluded by saying, "How helpful galleries and works of art are to artists, none but themselves know. No one by themselves [*sic*] can get on as rapidly or surely as where they have access to pictures."

If even the example of Suydam and Hubbard does not seem fully to account for Junius Sloan's art, it is not because there may have been other artists who influenced him more decisively, but because the help he got from them, or from the school as a whole, was useful in guiding his efforts rather than in inspiring them. His art was not inspired by other art, nor quite so much by nature as he thought; the ends at which he aimed were furnished him from deeper sources, and came to him in verbal form, in literary works, or, more directly, in the ideals absorbed in silence from his society. So far as literary sources are concerned, the story is soon told. In notebooks which he was using between 1856 and 1862, there are some titles he noted down, M. A. Dwight's "Introduction to the Study of Art," John Burnet's "Practical Hints on Portrait Painting," and he made a number of notes from the latter. He, or perhaps his wife, copied rather extensive parts of Gilbert Stuart's remarks on painting, some on technical data,



others which show that the idea of fidelity to nature was already deeply implanted in his mind: "Leave nature for an imaginary effect and you lose all. . . . All studies to be made with brush in hand. . . . Nonsense to think of perfecting oneself in drawing before one begins to paint."<sup>30</sup> In 1856, while at Princeton, Illinois, he bought the first volume of "The Literary Work of Sir Joshua Reynolds." The following year he purchased Ruskin's "Elements of Drawing," probably in connection with his growing interest in landscape. By 1860 he had bought, at Erie, the first two volumes of Ruskin's "Modern Painters," and he was at least enough interested to buy the other three volumes, at New York, in 1861. One could thus interpret his art as an application of Ruskin's ideas to landscape painting, but immediate contact with his society preceded, and in his case took precedence over, anything gotten from books. That society is rather completely expressed in one family, the Spencers, and we turn now to a brief account of their activities and ideas, for they are an important example of the society that surrounded the artist in the 19th century.

## V

THE FOUNT of the Spencer family, insofar as it interests us, was Platt R. Spencer (1800-64).<sup>31</sup> He became famous for a system of penmanship, called from his name, Spencerian, which was so thoroughly spread, through his efforts and those of enthusiastic associates and followers, that it remained basic to penmanship in the United States down to our days. We are not concerned with the exact value or originality of this system, but rather with its broader implications; for the ideas that clustered around it formed the chief furnishings of Junius Sloan's intellectual parlor.

Born in the Hudson River country, at East Catskill, N. Y., Platt Spencer's family moved west when he was ten years old, to Ashtabula, Ohio,

<sup>30</sup>Stuart's remarks, taken down by Matthew Jouett, are published in John Hill Morgan, "Gilbert Stuart and His Pupils," New York, 1939, pp. 81-93. Excerpts were published in "The Crayon," March, 1861, pp. 49-50. Sloan was in New York at this time and could have seen them in this version.

<sup>31</sup>Letters and other material in the Spencer Collection, in the Newberry Library, Chicago, and information given verbally by Percy H. Sloan, grandson of Platt R. Spencer, form the basis of the sketch given here. See also the following published sources: (1) Articles by S. S. Packard on P. R. Spencer in various educational journals, "The New York Teacher" (March 1861), "The Indiana School Journal" (May 1863), and especially, "The Ohio Educational Monthly" (June 1861), pp. 1-5; (2) the biography, with introduction by James A. Garfield, in Williams W. Williams, "History of Ashtabula County, Ohio," Phila., 1878, which is the chief source for the ordinary biographical dictionaries; (3) Robert C. Spencer, "Spencer Family and Genealogy," Milwaukee, Rob't C. Spencer, 1889; (4) Robert C. Spencer, "Father Spencer," in "Penman's Art Journal," XXII (1898), serially, beginning in February; (5) Ellen Spencer Mussey, "Spencerian Penmanship in the Making," in "Report of the National Association of Penmanship Teachers," Phila., 1927, pp. 39-45; and (6) "Lamb's Biographical Dictionary of the United States" (1903), s. v. Mussey.



and it was in this region along the shores of Lake Erie, the same in which Junius Sloan grew up a generation later, that he developed his system of writing and passed the rest of his life. He was a man of genial nature and prompt conviviality. Indeed, the latter quality detained him for some years in a wayward interlude concerning which most of his biographers are conspicuously silent. One of them, however, in explanation of his abandoning an early plan to enter the ministry, lifts the curtain momentarily, with a tactful reference to heredity: "Being a victim of inherited alcoholism, aggravated by the prevalent drinking customs, he fell, and his plans were changed." But he rose again, aided by a determined woman, Persis Duty, a school teacher, who was deterred neither by Platt Spencer's weakness nor by his sister's friendly warnings. The latter were reported by his daughter, Ellen, many years later, in a typical circumlocution. The sister, she says, "warned Miss Duty that, although her brother was gifted with an artistic temperament and was no doubt a genius, yet there was a risk involved in marrying him, because, as one result of his temperament, he was sometimes unstable." But Persis Duty had a plan. She married him forthwith, in 1828, and carried him off to the wild country in the neighborhood of Geneva, Ohio, her aim being to avoid a location with easily travelled roads. Making their way along the shore of Lake Erie in a rowboat, they landed at the mouth of Indian Creek, and took up their abode at first in an abandoned cabin. Going to Geneva, they bought this tract of densely wooded land and returned to live there, later moving further inland for their permanent home.

In this region of "untrodden ways" — yet not of idyllic springs, but by the powerful waters of the great lake; and in the rigors of the frontier setting chosen by the bride — the drama was played out. The new husband rebelled at first against his destiny, and would make his way to the towns for joyous reunions; but the return was painful. He would reach home again much battered-up, for the rough and ill-marked wood-roads would have been hard to follow with any comfort even when sober. Finally, surrounded by the powers of nature, and in the presence of a superb lack of pity displayed by his wife, the resolution came. He reformed. By 1832 he had publicly become a "tee-totaler"; and throughout his life he urged that solution as the only safe one. The spot at the mouth of Indian Creek, where he had first touched the shore of a new life, became almost hallowed ground in the memories of his family. Later a favorite bathing beach for him and his sons, it was commemorated in several pictures by Junius Sloan, as was the later homestead which became the center of the family cult. In the later idealization of the father by the children, this early triumph

threw a kind of consecration over his life which spurred them on to advance his work, not in fraternal rivalry alone, but as if also in the service of a sacred cause.

Thus Platt Spencer had been an exemplary character for years when his first copy-book slips were published, in 1848, and there was no reason why they should not be put in the hands of children in the public schools, which was done with vigor. One of his pupils, Victor M. Rice, who had joined with him in publishing the copy-slips of 1848, later became Superintendent of Public Instruction in New York state, and was thus in a position to help; and there were others. It is at this period that we see him in the early portrait by Junius Sloan (Fig. 2). Temptation overcome, his native gifts of geniality, readiness of speech, and ability to touch the imagination with his ideas, passed easily and effectively into a life of teaching, talking, conferring, writing, in which he initiated or helped plan, often helped establish, and then allowed others, his pupils or associates to carry on. The system was published in copy-book form in 1859. In 1861 a new series was brought out; and of this, we are complacently told, one million copies were distributed the next year. He built a log house, called "The Seminary," near his permanent home near Geneva, Ohio, and there he taught his system to those who came to learn, particularly to school teachers, who came between terms, alternating these sessions with trips to various points for longer or shorter periods of instruction. He had an extraordinary ability to make these brief contacts fruitful, not only imparting successfully the principles of the system, but inspiring a profound belief in its rightness and a devoted zeal in furthering it. We catch a glimpse of this, his especial gift, in the remark of one of his sons, "I cannot acquire that faculty which father possesses, to arouse the ambition and energy of a class. It requires the power of oratory which I lack."

The Spencerian system of writing was intended as a golden mean between the stiltedness of vertical hands and the exaggeration of extreme angular hands; it was semi-angular, that is, it was "natural." In fact, it was held to be based on nature's forms, as we learn from one of his poems, for Platt Spencer was an inveterate rhymster, readily casting his thoughts on various subjects into rhyme, and prompt to oblige with verses on all occasions. Some of the poems treat historical or patriotic subjects; but most are in a more friendly vein, some dealing with the ideal of temperance, others frankly humorous, a number expressing his ideas about penmanship. "The Origins of Spencerian Writing" gives his testimony on the origin and basis of his system:

Evolv'd 'mid nature's unprun'd scenes,  
On Erie's wild and woody shore,  
The rolling wave, the dancing stream, —  
The wild rose haunts in days of yore, —

The opal, quartz, and ammonite,  
Gleaming beneath the wavelet's flow,  
Each gave its lesson (how to write)  
In the loved years of long ago.

I seized the forms I lov'd so well  
Compounded them as meaning signs,  
And, to the music of the swell,  
Blent them with undulating vines . . . <sup>32</sup>

He worked out his system and formulated these ideas in the course of the 1830's and '40's, so that it was a finished thing in his mind, and projected against the entire history of writing, by the middle of the century, when Junius Sloan began to come into close contact with him and his family. He summed it up in a lecture, "The Origin, Progress and History of Writing," given about 1850, in which the following characterization of the Spencerian Penmanship occurs:

"The peculiarity of its prominent features consists in selecting from nature the elliptic curve or form which nature most delights to employ as adapted to the laws of motion and to animal and vegetable life, unfolding proportions most agreeable to the eye. . . . For its simplicity, elegance and beauty, it draws from nature's own peculiar model-curve of life and action. The seed, the bud, the flower, the fruit, all take the same oval; the tree, in stem, leaf, branch and root, maintains the same form, and even the pebbles displaced by the little waves."<sup>32</sup>

More than the shape of the letters was based on nature, however. His friend S. S. Packard, who published a number of articles on Spencer during his lifetime, quotes him concerning the characteristic feature of the continuous "line," which links as well as forms the letters. The author of the system held that this feature was inspired by observation of Indian Creek while still a youth, where the stream, "replete with beauty, life, and motion," issued from the forest and flowed across the pebbly beach to the lake. As he put it:

"Writing through whole lines without lifting the pen increases motion and need not mutilate form. Thus the streamlet taught me the lesson of concatenation, and practicing on this hint gave me greater freedom."

We see in Platt Spencer, then, the instinct to idealize nature as the great exemplar, to the extent of seeking in it the justification for the forms even of non-representational art, anticipating in this respect the architectural

<sup>32</sup>"Penman's Art Journal," XXII, No. 3 (Mar. 1898), pp. X-XI.

manifestoes of Sullivan and Wright at the end of the century. Spencer spoke with authority in regard to art; in his circle he was looked up to as one who had gained access to a higher truth; and Junius Sloan passed his formative years as an immediate member of this circle. Books, such as works of Ruskin, which he bought later did not inspire his profound respect for nature, but were rather chosen by him because they upheld the idealization of nature he had already acquired from his society, and which we find clearly expressed in Spencer.<sup>33</sup>

Another of the conspicuous features of the intellectual world that revolved around Platt Spencer is the constant dependence on the idea, and the frequent reiteration of the word, beauty. How he took this idea as the essential mediator between art and nature is shown in lines from another poem:

There's beauty in the woodland's depth  
Of tree and shrub and vine;  
There's beauty on the written page  
Where nature's forms entwine. . . .

It is the same beauty, verbalized into an independent essence, that gives significance both to nature and to art; and Platt Spencer vigorously professed this principle to the end of his life. Perhaps his sons did not use the word quite so readily, but his daughter, Sara, wife of Junius Sloan, took it up with fervor. It was always on her lips. In a note to her sister, Ellen, dated December 23, 1867, we find the typical exhortation: "I rejoiced that you were able to perceive so much beauty around you. . . . Continue to see things beautiful." Junius Sloan was subject to a like preoccupation, as we have suggested already in regard to his paintings. Writing to a patron in Washington, D. C., Dr. William M. Ward, on May 5, 1870, he said, "The sketching season is near at hand, and during it I shall wander somewhat in quest of beauty." Again, in transcribing in a notebook some lines from Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Childhood," he or his wife changed one word in a famous line, making it read, "But trailing clouds of beauty do we come." Thus was the word ever in their thoughts!

The further ideas of the Spencers were connected with spreading the system, which takes us from Platt Spencer to his sons, the Spencers of Junius Sloan's own age. Their activity formed the framework to which Junius Sloan would have to refer his own life and from which he would

<sup>33</sup>Ruskin's "Elements of Drawing," Letter II, "Sketching from Nature," contains observations similar to Spencer's on the shapes found in nature. However, Spencer had developed his ideas before the publication of Ruskin's works. Whether they were drawn from a "dilute Rousseauism" (G. H. Genzmer, in "Dictionary of American Biography"), or from more specific sources, only a complete study of Spencer would show. He and his family are worth such a study.

judge whether it was a success or failure. Brief reference to this activity will show the force of the example with which Junius Sloan was confronted, as well as the ideas with which he was surrounded.

Platt Spencer had early given thought and effort to the establishment of business colleges. As early as 1852 he is said to have started such a "college" at Pittsburgh, later sold to Peter Duff and merged with Duff's College. Also in 1852 his pupils helped establish Bryant, Lusk, and Stratton's Commercial College of Cleveland, and this partnership eventually expanded its activities into a chain of over forty colleges in the principal cities. Robert C. Spencer, the eldest son, after graduation from a "mercantile college" in Cincinnati, entered Bryant, Lusk, and Stratton's chain of commercial colleges, becoming for a time a partner in the firm, making it, in the kaleidoscopic changes of name displayed by these colleges, Bryant, Spencer, Lusk and Stratton. He finally settled in Milwaukee in 1863, as founder, owner and director of the Spencerian Business College of that city, and led the reform movement among business colleges, beginning in 1865, which ended in the formation of the International Business College Association. Henry C. Spencer, one of the twins, was for a time Superintendent of Penmanship in The Bryant and Stratton chain, then settled in Washington, D. C., in 1866, as director of the Spencerian Business College there. His twin brother, Harvey A. Spencer, ended as director of the Spencerian Business College of New York City, but in fact had travelled all over the country, teaching from Boston to Texas. It was he who carried the good tidings of a natural penmanship to the south, where he travelled extensively, "teaching in the principal cities," as the historian of Ashtabula tells us. In Texas he combined this apostolic activity with the more mundane business of dealing in state lands; and for a time in the 1870's he was business manager of the Commonwealth Business College of Dallas. Apparently his activity in advancing the Spencerian system was not enough to absorb his zeal for improving the practices of his fellowmen, for after settling in New York he joined the vegetarian movement, and also interested himself in the theories of Henry George, taking an active part in the reform movement of the latter. Platt R. Spencer, Jr., was educated professionally by his father and in the Bryant and Stratton College of Cleveland, after which he taught for a time in their colleges in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Indianapolis. In 1865, just after his father's death, he carried on the instruction at Geneva, founding what he called the Spencerian Institute of Penmanship. This he later moved to Cleveland, merging it with the Union Business College (the old Bryant and Stratton's) and changing the name to Spencerian Business College. Later he settled at



Detroit as director of a business college there, which, before the end of the century, had attained to the name of Detroit Business University. Another son, Lyman C. Spencer, was skilled in representational drawing as well as penmanship. His letters, illustrated with drawings, written during his military service in the Civil War, are said still to exist somewhere in the family connection, and might be of interest from several points of view. He was considered by the family to have carried the art of penmanship to the highest point of beauty, as shown in the large exhibition piece, "The Declaration of Independence," which was shown at the Centennial Exhibition of 1876. He devoted himself largely, however, to the publishing activities which the success of the Spencerian system rendered desirable; and it was he, especially, who continued the friendly relations with James A. Garfield already established by the elder Spencer. The latter had won Garfield to his system when he had come to lecture on it at Hiram, Ohio, where Garfield was principal of the Hiram Eclectic Institute, 1857-59; and Lyman Spencer studied there and obtained a degree.

The third of the leading ideas of the Spencers was rather a complex of ideas joining art, education, and the practical life, and it was developed in connection with the business colleges. They held that the crying need in American life was for an education that would not only deal with art and beauty but could also be applied in everyday life, in contrast to the classical education of the time; and they felt that the business college, teaching their art, the Spencerian penmanship, and other skills that would prepare the student for a useful life in the business world, was the answer to that need. Typical is the letterhead of the Spencerian Business College of Washington, D. C., with its challenging slogan, "Education for Real Life." It was in support of this position that Garfield was most useful to the Spencers. Prominent in the public life of the time, active in Congress, and to be elected to the Presidency in 1880, his approval added a luster to their cause which it could otherwise hardly have acquired. He wrote the warmly appreciative introduction to the "Life" of 1878. Long before that, however, in the role of educator he had taken a position very favorable to the aims of the Spencers, as in an address of 1867, "College Education," which contained a forceful protest against what he considered an undue emphasis on classical subjects. He carried this criticism even farther in an address of 1869, at the graduation exercises of what was then called The Consolidated Business College of Washington, D. C., Henry C. Spencer, Principal. It is important for the history of ideas and education in the United States, its attack on the conventional colleges being coupled with praise of the business colleges for their closer relation to actual life.

Parts of it remind us of the later strictures of John Dewey. The importance of this endorsement will be apparent if we remember that Garfield was a man of considerable culture. He had graduated from Williams, he had taught the classics at Hiram, and he is said to have read the French novelists in the original for his own enjoyment.<sup>34</sup>

Thus the five sons, along with their associates, were actively engaged in teaching their father's system and in propagating the ideas received from him. They were successful. They presented an impressive picture of hearty and useful activity which ensured them recognized places in the life of their communities. Compared with them, their brother-in-law, Junius R. Sloan, the painter, was a very retiring person indeed.

The two daughters of Platt Spencer who survived to the end of the century did not lag behind their brothers in zeal in their father's work; but they also brought two new, and not entirely harmonious ideals into the world of the Spencers. Contradictory, yet curiously combined in the crucible of family rivalry, these were the ideals of Gothic art and the rights of women. Sara Spencer, the elder sister, who married Junius Sloan, was accorded by her family the title of finest penwoman in America. She had taught her father's system even before her brothers, serving as her father's assistant in Pittsburgh, teaching under his direction in Chamberlin's Commercial College in 1852, and again, later, in Cleveland; and she taught through much of her married life, in the schools and seminaries of the time, as noted above. She served in a way as her father's secretary during much of the latter part of his life, and she considered that she thus had a particularly close and intimate understanding of his principles, and she felt that she had important insights about the system which had been overlooked by her brothers. Devoted to the rights of women in a more general way also, this feeling joined with interest in the idea of Gothic to inspire a plan of the two sisters — the chief effort was apparently Sara's — to publish a modification of the Spencerian penmanship. There were several ends in view in this. The new hand was to be more "feminine," thus answering the right of women to a form of writing suited to their sex; it was to call up, at least in name, the "beauty" of Gothic; it was to stimulate interest in penmanship at a time when it was suffering from the development of the typewriter; and finally — we cannot avoid the conclusion — it was to redress in some measure, as between the men and the women of

<sup>34</sup>The speech of 1867 is printed in "The Works of James A. Garfield," Burke A. Hinsdale, Ed., Boston, 1882-83, 2 vols. That of 1869 is not printed there, nor is it mentioned in Theodore C. Smith's "Life and Letters of James A. Garfield," New Haven, 1925. It was reported rather fully in the Washington newspapers: "The Daily Morning Chronicle," July 2, 1869, p. 4; and "The National Republican," July 2, 1869, p. 2.

the Spencer family, the public distribution of credit for continuing and developing the work of their father. The plan and its motivations are expressed in the dummy for a copy-book remaining in the Spencer Collection entitled, "The American Anglo-Gothic Series of Copy-Books. Arranged and Written by the Daughters of P. R. Spencer, Author and Master of the American Semi-Angular System of Penmanship." Sara and Ellen are given as the authors, and it is dedicated to their mother and their three deceased sisters; that is, the father and all the women of the family appear by name on the title page. Alternate names are given on succeeding pages of the dummy: The Columbian Gothic; The Gothic Spencerian; The American Gothic; and The Spencerian Gothic.

Sara went east in the later eighties for what she thought was to be the final working out of the new system and completion of plans for publication, but nothing came of this but heart-burnings on her part. She felt that the brothers unjustly held back their support, which in a way did not surprise her; but harder to bear was the feeling that Ellen did not devote herself wholeheartedly to the venture, but in the end lightly put it aside in pursuit of her own interests. In the first flush of her disappointment, this neglect had for Sara almost the character of an apostasy; and no doubt it was hard for her, the elder, who had begun by adopting a tone of maternal protection, to see the younger act with such independence, and in a field where Sara's deepest feelings were involved. In the end the bonds of feminism held, and she saw herself and Ellen awaiting justification in their sons.

Thus a "Spencerian Gothic" was never published, although it was under consideration throughout the 1880's. So far as script is concerned, an amalgam of Spencerian and Gothic would seem to be a contradictory idea, the Spencerian being based on a narrow point and Gothic on a broad point, with consequent differences in character. Rather than such a mixture, however, the notion of a "Spencerian Gothic" signifies merely the popularity of the Gothic ideal, and the desire to draw upon the appeal which Gothic had at the time. The notion of bringing Gothic in some way to the support of the Spencerian penmanship apparently goes back nearly to the time of Platt R. Spencer's life, for in the Spencer Collection there is a clipping of an article, "The Gothic Effect: St. Patrick's Cathedral," from a paper of 1867.<sup>35</sup> The envelope in which it was kept bears the label, "The Gothic and Angular." This fact, and the titles for the copy-book noted above, indicate that the connection between Spencerian and Gothic was to be made on the basis of an angularity common to Gothic architecture

<sup>35</sup>"The Home Journal," Dec. 15, 1867, p. 1.

and Spencerian writing, rather than on anything in Gothic script. The article was doubtless clipped, at least it was saved, by Sara; but whether the idea of connecting Gothic and Spencerian had occurred to Platt Spencer himself is doubtful. For it would represent a marked departure from his original view, which related the Spencerian to nature's forms rather than to those of any art; and it would thus represent a later accretion to his fund of ideas, a reaction to a cultural situation which was far removed, in complexity, in competitive strivings, from the simple days in which he first devised his system, "on Erie's wild and woody shore."

## VI

SUCH WAS the society in which Junius Sloan lived. It is not surprising that his art should not be completely explained by the influence of the artists whose example helped him, for it was based primarily in his society, of which the Spencers happen to give us a clear view, and it sprang from a natural and instinctive attempt to express its ideals. Hence the essential independence of his art in regard to other artists; hence, too its significance as a direct expression of American culture of the time. This relationship, however, gives final meaning to the term "self-taught." The deeper inspiration of his art, too, did not come from himself so completely as a superficial use of that term would imply; he was also taught by his society.

As regards the particular group with which he lived, the Spencers, there was another, and less beneficent, relation involved. They made up his society perhaps too exclusively. The chief friend of his youth and early manhood was Robert C. Spencer; he was in close touch with Platt Spencer during his formative years; and for the rest of his life he was married to Sara Spencer. Thus the ideas of the "originator" were always held before him, the doings of the sons always a subject of discussion in his home. He lived surrounded by their ideas and activities, surrounded too by the echoes of their success, compared to which the noise that his own art made in the world scarcely rose above a whisper. Of their three leading ideas — adherence to nature, the worship of beauty, and the importance of the practical life — he easily exemplified the first two, but he fell short in regard to the third. His art was of no direct use in carrying on the business of the day. Thus, despite the fact that they honored him for his devotion to beauty and nature, he did not fulfill their creed as a whole; and this deviation was made important by the lack of the worldly success that was an unspecified, but important, factor in their view of life. He had trained himself from early days to feel willing to sacrifice this success;



but however much this freed him to satisfy himself in the study of nature, and however much his devotion to art might seem to be of a higher order than theirs, purified by this sacrifice, the contrast with the Spencers could not be escaped. Although any artist has sources within him, in the personal preferences he has acquired, whence his art springs, yet his relationship to his society will also help determine its general direction. The exact effect will doubtless vary with the personality concerned, and also with the period; the typical reaction to such a contrast between an artist and his society today would likely be the reverse of that in Sloan's time; but in his case and in his time only one result could be expected. Sloan was no Whistler. It would have taken quite a different personality from his to react to this situation by turning away from conventional realism. The contrast between his life and that of the Spencers could only lead him to cling the more tenaciously to nature; for nature reproduced without important change was the only basis, for him and his society, on which to justify giving his life to art alone.

Sloan's late work, then, shows no deviation from the same realism he had used before. The central fact about it is that, after the early 1880's, there is no essential development, only a slight increase in skill. After the settlement in Chicago in 1873 he frequented exhibitions less, according to his son, preferring to give his time to his own work and the study of nature. He would have seen the same work as in New York, for the same names appear in the exhibitions; but his continued development would have depended on more than sight of new pictures. Fastened into a rather narrow way by his society and his relationship to it, inspired by the need to express its, and his, ideal of nature, he clearly felt that his style was formed, and that he had only to study nature with it to the end. From the 1880's on he turned increasingly to water-color, but used it merely instead of oil, rather than for its own qualities. He frequently used it to repeat a picture done earlier in oil, with results that invariably seem less good than the earlier versions. Thus a part of his late work reveals a tendency to rest upon and repeat his earlier achievements. The other, more original, pictures of his later years are more effective than the water-colors, but the differences which separate them from the works of the 1870's are in the way of greater skill in handling the style already evolved. There is a slight general increase in breadth; transitions are handled more easily, so that the pictures are, so to speak, more neatly put together; there is a slightly greater emphasis on light, either in gradation, whereby it contributes to the quality just mentioned, or as pattern; but there is no important change either in the general treatment of the scene or the form of the picture. This work may be



represented by the *Wisconsin River at Prairie du Sac*, of 1887, a study of a motif rather than a complete picture, or the *Creek on the Schuyler Farm near Amsterdam, N. Y.*, of 1895 (Fig. 14). Thus there is no need to discuss this work further. Doubtless an artist with Sloan's degree of dependence on nature is apt to continue with the style he first masters; nor should we expect the self-taught artist, any more than the academic, to manifest continued development.

Toward the end of his life his manner of marketing his work changed, probably reflecting a falling off in patronage; he adopted the practice of taking pictures to the home or office of a client and leaving them for consideration; and this became the rule in the course of the nineties, when he gave up keeping a downtown studio in favor of the one in the new house. Thus we hear in a letter to his son, in 1889, of pictures left at a home on Prairie Avenue, at that time a fashionable district. It was in this way that, the year before, a lady from Germany, a friend of Mrs. E. D. Hosmer, one of Sloan's patrons, and wife of an officer in the German army, saw and liked his work, and bought a picture to take home to Germany. He reported the incident in a letter to his wife, who was on her trip east at the time (Dec. 17, 1888). He understood that the picture was to be presented to the Emperor, and he went on to speak jocularly, and no doubt feelingly too, of the possible effects of having a picture in a royal gallery.<sup>36</sup>

Thus his patronage was apparently shrinking, as his life was drawing to its end, for in the nineties Junius Sloan was growing old. Curiously enough, his actual face and figure, caught in a moment of weariness, entered the world of art as a symbol of the end of life, in the photographic illustrations of literary works made around the turn of the century. The photographer, William Dyer, with whom he was on friendly terms, used a study of him in his illustrations of Riley's "Love Lyrics," for the verses entitled, "A Old Played-Out Song."<sup>37</sup> But the more striking fact is that, despite age and occasional ill-health, he continued to paint whenever he could, trying constantly to improve himself, searching nature as in his youth. His faithfulness indicates a love of art that in the end escapes analysis, and must be taken as an essential feature of the culture of the time.

Sloan's lack of development toward the end of his life could thus be

<sup>36</sup>There is no mention of such a picture in the property records of the House of Brandenburg — Prussia, as I am informed through the kindness of Dr. von Meibom. Sloan, or his informant, may well have misunderstood the intended disposition of the picture.

<sup>37</sup>James Whitcomb Riley, "Love Lyrics, With Life Pictures by William Dyer," Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, re-issue of 1905. A photograph of an entirely different model illustrates the poem in the copy of the original issue of 1899 which I have seen. (For the various editions, see Anthony J. and Dorothy R. Russo, "A Bibliography of James Whitcomb Riley," Indianapolis, 1944.) The identification was made by the artist's son, Percy H. Sloan.

explained by various factors in him as an individual, but it is hardly pertinent to insist on this. There will necessarily be factors in the artist on which his actions turn, and which can even be used to explain his movements in his art; but from a more general point of view these actions or



Fig. 14. J. R. Sloan: Creek on the Schuyler Farm, Amsterdam, N. Y., 1895  
*Sloan Collection, Chicago*

movements will seem to be an immediate part of historical developments. Correspondingly, we come to a point in the study of any individual at which we feel that what he does must be referred to these general developments. In regard to Junius Sloan's late work, at least, there is no reason to defer further this change in point of reference. His inability to develop beyond his style of the early eighties was not peculiar to him. He was an entirely characteristic part of the American landscape painting of his time, and by the eighties and nineties this school was clearly coming to its end. Once it had been established, and accepted as the expression of an attitude toward nature — in a collaboration between artists and public for which Junius Sloan and his particular society may stand as example, — it displayed a marked inability to develop in any fundamental manner. It did not seem to have within it the forces that could lead to a new approach; and its attempts to develop in any ambitious way seemed to end in efforts that had no future, from the geographical reports of a Church or a Bierstadt to the uneasy surmises of an Inness. Perhaps Homer Martin gave promise

of being able to work over to an art which would be more independent visually; but in general it was only with younger men — those who came after the group called, in F. J. Mather's perceptive survey, "The Great Landscape School" — that there was a concerted advance beyond the confines of the older attitude. In this advance, which achieved the American Impressionist landscape of the nineties, the kind of literary or verbal complications that had marked the previous work were given up; and if American art seemed to become less national in doing so, it became at the same time less provincial, achieving a more fruitful contact with European art. However much the older landscape might still pull at the heart-strings of Americans, it had done all that it could do; it too was a "played-out song."

But Junius Sloan had no inkling of this. He kept on in the old way, which his society had hallowed by so many associations, striving to express the beauty he could see in nature, looking for new scenes in which to find that beauty. He died in August 1900, as the result of a fall, in Redlands, in the far west, whither he had gone to study the scenery and missions of California.

#### STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC.,

Required by the Acts of Congress of August 24, 1912, and March 3, 1933, of Art in America, published four times a year at Springfield, Mass., for Summer, 1952

State of Massachusetts }  
County of Hampden } ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Everett H. Pond, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of ART IN AMERICA and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, and business manager are:

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EVERETT H. POND, Business Manager

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of September, 1952.

PRESTON D. GILMORE, Notary Public, Hampden County, Mass. (My commission expires Jan. 2, 1959)

